

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

SPEECHES AND ADDRESSES

BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

STANLEY BALDWIN, M.P.

PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD
OF THE TREASURY

LONDON

HODDER AND STOUGHTON

1935

First printed, November, 1935

Salar Jung Library
WILMERTON

Made and Printed in Great Britain
Wyman & Sons Ltd., London, Reading and Fakenham

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

“ THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM ” follows, in the important matter of selection, the principle adopted in an earlier collection of Mr. Baldwin's addresses entitled “ Our Inheritance.” Throughout this volume he speaks as the statesman and Englishman, not as the party leader concerned with immediate issues.

The general scheme under which the thirty-seven chosen speeches are grouped is perhaps sufficiently indicated by the titles set out in the table of contents. Love of the English countryside is the recurring theme through the third group, and belief in the younger generation dominates the seventh. No apology seems necessary for the lighter note that at times invades the sixth group of speeches, for in these Mr. Baldwin is literally at his happiest.

The last speech but one—incidentally the only one addressed to a “ political ” audience—was intended to serve as epilogue, as the first serves as prologue, to a volume bearing the title “ This Torch of Freedom.” But, when the book was already in preparation, Mr. Baldwin delivered an address on Peace in which, as *The Times* said next day, he was “ at his best and most characteristic,” displaying, in the midst of a General Election, “ that curious detachment of mind which his countrymen have learned to expect from him.”

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Without this speech the volume would not now seem complete. It is well able to stand alone.

The large majority of the speeches in this volume are only preserved through the skill of the newspaper reporters to whom Mr. Baldwin has so often paid tribute. The publication of many of these speeches has therefore been made possible only through the courtesy of the Press in allowing the publishers to make full use of copyright material. Grateful acknowledgments are especially due to *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Morning Post*, *The Scotsman*, *The Glasgow Herald*, *The Yorkshire Post*, *The Liverpool Post*, *The Birmingham Post*, *The Western Mail*, *The Inverness Courier*, *The Kidderminster Times*, *The Stratford-on-Avon Herald*, *The Hampshire Observer*, *The Wiltshire Gazette*, *The Baptist Times*, *Public Administration* (the quarterly Journal of the Institute of Public Administration), *The Listener* and the British Broadcasting Corporation, the Press Association, and Messrs. Longmans Green & Co. ; also to the Brotherhood Movement, the Harrow Association, and the International Peace Society.

CONTENTS

I

	PAGE
THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM <i>July, 1935</i>	3
OUR NATIONAL CHARACTER <i>September, 1933</i>	7
OUR FREEDOM IS OUR OWN <i>March, 1934</i>	15
UNTO WHOMSOEVER MUCH IS GIVEN <i>May, 1929</i>	25
THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY <i>July, 1930</i>	30
THE CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE <i>October, 1933</i>	52

II

RELIGION AND NATIONAL LIFE <i>May, 1931</i>	77
THE BIBLE <i>May, 1928</i>	88
JOHN WESLEY <i>November, 1928</i>	94
THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE BAPTISTS <i>January, 1929</i>	100
WILLIAM BOOTH <i>April, 1929</i>	106

CONTENTS

III

	PAGE
THE WEALTH AND THE GLORY OF ENGLAND <i>July, 1928</i>	113
THE LOVE OF COUNTRY THINGS <i>January, 1931</i>	119
THE COUNTRY BACKGROUND <i>February, 1929</i>	123
OLD SARUM <i>June, 1931</i>	127
COUNTY PATRIOTISM <i>November, 1933</i>	134
THE ENGLISH HERITAGE <i>October, 1929</i>	139

IV

SHAKESPEARE <i>April, 1932</i>	147
SCOTT <i>January, 1930</i>	155
BURNE-JONES <i>June, 1933</i>	173
WILLIAM MORRIS <i>February, 1934</i>	180

V

TO A HIGHLAND AUDIENCE <i>June, 1930</i>	189
TO A WELSH AUDIENCE <i>August, 1928</i>	194
TO A CANADIAN AUDIENCE <i>August, 1932</i>	197
TO AN AMERICAN AUDIENCE <i>November, 1928</i>	211

CONTENTS

VI

	PAGE
A TOAST TO AN ARCHBISHOP <i>July, 1928</i>	221
A TOAST TO A YOUNG MAN <i>December, 1928</i>	228
THE B.O.P. <i>January, 1929</i>	234
SAILORS <i>March, 1928</i>	241
GEOLOGISTS <i>October, 1929</i>	249
LIBRARIES <i>July, 1929</i>	256

VII

SUCCESS IS NOT ENOUGH <i>November, 1934</i>	265
FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE <i>January, 1930</i>	271
FIND YOURSELVES ! <i>May, 1930</i>	289
PIETY AND TRUE LEARNING <i>October, 1931</i>	302
BE READY ! <i>March, 1928</i>	308

VIII

BOUND OVER TO MAKE THE PEACE <i>October, 1935</i>	319
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I

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM
OUR NATIONAL CHARACTER
OUR FREEDOM IS OUR OWN
UNTO WHOMSOEVER MUCH IS GIVEN
THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY
THE CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

*A speech of welcome delivered at
the Empire Parliamentary Association's Conference
in Westminster Hall,
July 4, 1935*

THE lot, the fortunate lot, has fallen to me to-day to express to our overseas colleagues that feeling of warm and heartfelt welcome which we extend to them on the occasion not only of His Majesty's Silver Jubilee, but of the Silver Jubilee of the Empire Association itself.

As Mr. Speaker said, this spot where we meet to-day is sacred ground. It is the Hall of Rufus, the nursery of the English Common Law and the nursery of our Parliament. Here, Edward the Confessor moved the royal residence that he might be close to that Abbey which he was building. Here, Henry the Third lived, and planted an orchard of pear trees where to-day the buses go thundering down the street, that he might look over the white blossom in the spring and see the still whiter walls of his Abbey rising before his delighted eyes. In that Abbey itself there is still the Chapel of the Pyx, which was then the Royal Treasury; the Chapel of the Confessor, the

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Royal Sepulchre, and the Chapter House, the meeting place of Parliament itself. And here it was that only fifty short years after Magna Carta, the first Parliament was held, when the Burgesses and the Knights of the Shire sat with the Barons in the Curia Regis.

Those great Barons of Magna Carta have passed away, but the memory lingers. Well can I recall how once, in the chancel of Tewkesbury Abbey, I lit on a plain stone, that must have been recarved over and over again, to one of those Barons who had signed Magna Carta. And on it, cut in big stone letters, were words that must have been composed by himself—MAGNA CARTA EST LEX : DEINDE CAVEAT REX. “Magna Carta is the Law : let the King look out.”

So it has always been with tyrants among our own people : when the King was a tyrant, let him look out. And it has always been the same, and will be the same, whether the tyrant be the Barons, whether the tyrant be the Church, whether he be demagogue or dictator—let them look out.

Fifty years after Magna Carta, de Montfort's Parliament was held in this Hall. No need to say much of that Parliament to-day, but to recall, as I said, that it was the first Parliament in which the Burgesses, the Knights of the Shire and the Barons sat together. But let us never forget what George Trevelyan brings out so clearly : that the English Parliament has had no one man for its

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

maker, neither Simon de Montfort, nor even King Edward. No man made it, for it grew. It was the natural outcome, through long centuries, of the common sense and the good nature of the English people, who have always preferred committees to dictators, elections to street-fighting, and Talking Shops to revolutionary tribunals.

It is often said to-day by detractors of democracy, at home and particularly abroad, that the parliamentary system has failed. After all, this is the only country (with the countries from which our colleagues come) where parliamentary government has grown up, the only country in which it is traditional and hereditary, where it is flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone. Whatever failures may have come to parliamentary government in countries which have not those traditions, and where it is not a natural growth, that is no proof that parliamentary government has failed. When it has failed in our Empire, then it will be time to acknowledge the failure of that system.

We know ourselves what difficult times we live in. We know equally, and we are conscious of the fact, that with us—all of us at home and overseas—there rests the responsibility whether this form of government will remain, or whether it will fail. It is therefore good that we who meet from all corners of the world to take counsel with one another, should, at any rate among ourselves, hold

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

this torch of freedom alight, and alive, until other nations come to see our ways.

I would extend a special welcome to-day (for it is the first time they have been here) to the delegates who have come from India, where they are now about to make a long step forward in that great adventure with which we have been occupied so long. We wish them all happiness and all success in that great experiment. We trust that they will profit by our mistakes, shun our vices, and imitate our virtues, if there be any.

Public life, as all of us know, is a great trial in many ways. But I believe there is no better life to which a man can devote himself than this life of public service, if he takes into it his ideals, and if he is determined to think more of the good of the country than of himself. The whole character of popular government depends upon the character of its leaders ; and the gathering together of this body from all the world should be an immense encouragement and strengthening to us in these times of difficulty.

OUR NATIONAL CHARACTER

*A Broadcast address delivered in London,
September 25, 1933*

I THINK it is a good thing at a time like this, to take stock, as it were, of our national characteristics, of any possible changes that are affecting those characteristics, and generally to investigate whence we derive what we call our National Character, and how it is fitted to help us in the struggle that lies before us.

We ought never to forget in England that, for a period as long as from the time of the Reformation to the present day, we were an integral part of the great Roman Empire, and, therefore, an integral part of that great European imperial federation. Historians may differ, and do differ, as to what mark (if any) was left on this country by that Roman occupation, but I find it hard to believe that for four hundred years the legions could have lived in this country and not left a mark which, consciously or unconsciously, would be felt for generations afterwards. The name "England," of course, comes from the great invasion that followed the break-up of that Empire—that is, the invasion of the Saxons ; but do not let us run away

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

with the idea that the Saxons who invaded England came from Dresden, because they did not. They came from the Frisian coast, and they were a people fierce, savage, and with the sea in their blood. And the ages when they were conquering England and settling in it have more right perhaps, to be called the "dark ages" than any period in English history since the time of Christ.

If you had been able, at that time, to fly over Europe in an aeroplane, you could have seen all that was happening in Western Europe and Central Europe, but when you came to these islands you would have found them shrouded in mist, and it would only be as the clouds rolled away that there showed, between the rifts, the secular struggle that was going on down below. But little is really known of that settlement, its beginning, or its middle. We do know the characteristics of that race, and how the better characteristics have become part of our own. They were self-reliant, they were bold, they were intensely loyal to their chiefs; they had no national patriotism, for there was no country for which they could have national patriotism, but they took the keenest local interest in their own settlements and their tribes and their own tribal chieftains.

We do not know what it was that sent a whole nation out from that coast into this country, but there is a theory that has been launched by some historians, that Attila and his Huns got far north,

OUR NATIONAL CHARACTER

and that the Saxons *en masse* pushed across the sea to these islands to get away from the Mongolian invasion, which was the thing they hated and dreaded more than anything ; and if there be any historical foundation for that, it is rather a wonderful thought that as by-products of the Hunnish invasion were formed the Venetian Empire in the south of Europe, and, ultimately, the British Empire in the north.

But scarcely had the Saxons completed their works when the most memorable invasion of all took place—the Scandinavian, which was divided in two parts. No one will ever know what was the mysterious urge that drove the Scandinavians out of their fiords and sent them, in their long boats, across the Atlantic and round to the Black Sea, so that in Athens, in Venice, in Constantinople, those wild vikings were equally known. They came, they ravaged, they pillaged, and they settled ; and with them there came a sea-sense and love of adventure that has cropped up again and again from time to time in our history, and which, I hope, will be with us as long as we are a nation. It cropped up in Elizabethan times, and it broke out again in Stuart times, and I cannot help thinking that had our people not had in their very souls the sea traditions of their Scandinavian ancestors, the Pilgrim Fathers would never have survived that first winter on Cape Cod. I wonder if you realise what the courage of those men was ? Courage

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

enough, to go in a long-boat and push across the North Atlantic! But you must remember that to them the world was full of potential dangers and perils which do not exist for us. They would not have been surprised had they met sea-serpents, or dragons, or men walking without their heads! All those perils might be expected by them, in addition to the perils of the sea, and of the weather. But they faced them; they perished in numbers, but they won through, and not long after there came the last invasion, and, in many ways, the most important of all those that took place on our coasts. And that was the invasion of the Normans—perhaps one of the greatest races that has ever lived on this earth.

I always think it is a great mistake to regard the Normans who came to this country as Frenchmen. Of course, they were French in a sense, but they were in essence gallicised Scandinavians: they were first or second cousins of the vikings who had come a century before, at the time when the other Scandinavians settled in the Valley of the Seine; and Norman arms and Norman prowess were known, as Macaulay said, “from the Atlantic Ocean to the Dead Sea.” They were a nation of warriors, and they were much more—a nation which had acquired, in the century or century-and-a-half in which they had lived in France, Christianity, a certain amount of learning, a knowledge of architecture and building, and a knowledge

OUR NATIONAL CHARACTER

of law, and a knowledge of government. They brought to this country a sense of unity, a sense of nationality, and an ordered government. For a century or more, it was a toss-up whether England became a province of a great French kingdom, or whether she became a kingdom of her own. But within a century-and-a-half or two centuries of the Norman invasion, the English nation, for the first time, was welded into one more or less homogeneous whole.

During all the Middle Ages, and indeed, throughout later years—and to a certain extent many of our troubles to-day are due to the same cause—national boundaries in Europe were fluid. Our boundary was the sea ; it was a fixed boundary, and a boundary which none could cross when once there was a united nation able to guard that sea frontier ; and it is owing to that, primarily and principally, that we were able to develop in this country our own peculiar civilisation and our own freedom in a security which was alien, at that time, to almost every other nation of the world.

I should like, just at this point, to remind you of some words written by a very distinguished historian and Master of Balliol, Mr. A. L. Smith. He said :

“ Nowhere was the village community so real and enduring a thing as it was in England for at least twelve centuries of its history. In every parish men met almost daily in humble, but very

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

real self-government, to be judged by their fellows, or fined by them, or punished as bad characters ; to settle the ploughing times and harvest times, the fallowing and the grassing rules for the whole village. To these twelve centuries of discipline we owe the peculiar English capacity for self-government, the enormous English development of the voluntary principle in all manner of institutions : and our aptitude for colonisation, our politics, our commercial enterprise, our Colonial Empire, are all due to the spirit of co-operation, the spirit of fair-play and give-and-take, the habit of working to a given purpose, which tempered the hard and grim individuality of the national character."

I want you to notice particularly those last words, "the grim individuality," and "the spirit of co-operation." The English character is largely one of those contrasts. As a nation we grumble, we never worry, and the more difficult times are, the more cheerful we become. Indifferent we may be in many ways to what is going on in the world outside, but this indifference is soon shed in times of difficulty. We are always serene in times of difficulty. We are not a military nation, but we are great fighters—as we ought to be, from the stock of which I have told you. We have staying power, we are not rattled. I remember being very amused and rather pleased by a writer in *The Times*, who said that my spiritual home was in the

OUR NATIONAL CHARACTER

last ditch. If that be so, I share that ditch with most of my fellow-countrymen.

Then, above all, the English people have a curious sense of humour, rather than wit. Humour comes from the heart ; wit comes from the brain. We can laugh at ourselves. Do you remember what Ruskin said ? “ The English laugh is the purest and truest in the metals that can be minted,” and indeed, only Heaven can know what the country owes to it. Well, laughter is one of the best things that God has given us, and with hearty laughter neither malice nor indecency can exist. And of all men who have shown us what that laughter can mean, none was like Dickens, every one of whose characters is English to the marrow ; and if I might mention a living writer, I think the truest Englishmen are found in Mr. Priestley’s novels.

Kindliness, sympathy with the under dog, love of home ! Are not these all characteristics of the ordinary Englishman that you know ? He is a strong individualist in this, that he does not want to mould himself into any common mould, to be like everybody else ; he likes to develop his own individuality. And yet he can combine for service. Some of the best things in this country have originated among our own common people with no help from governments—friendly society work, our trade unions, our hospitals and our education before the State took it in hand. Then the Englishman has a profound respect for law and

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

order—that is part of his tradition of self-government. Ordered liberty—not disordered liberty, nor what invariably follows, tyranny ; but ordered liberty, at present one of the rare things of this topsy-turvy world.

If these things be true ; if these few qualities and characteristics which I have so briefly mentioned be, in fact, characteristic of our people, I say that such qualities were never more needed in the world. Let us hold on to what we are ; let us not try to be like anybody else. It was said by some of the chroniclers of the time, that the Normans conquered England because the Englishmen tried to ape the Frenchmen, and not be themselves. We can respect the fine qualities of other countries, but let us keep to our own. With our pertinacity, our love of freedom, our love of ordered freedom, our respect for law, our respect for the individual and our power of combining in service ; indeed, in our strength and in our weakness, I believe, from my heart, that our people are fitted to pass through whatever trials may be before us, and to emerge—if they are true to their own best traditions—a greater people in the future than they have been in the past.

OUR FREEDOM IS OUR OWN

*A Broadcast address delivered to schools on the
subject of political freedom, London,
March 6, 1934*

I SUPPOSE the reason that I was asked to speak to you this afternoon is partly from the fact that I was a member of a Sixth Form for some time, many, many years ago, and that I have had some experience in government in this country, and am, in a very simple and amateur way, a student of history.

It is impossible in the space of a few minutes to do more than give you some lines of thought which I hope, and believe, may be of use to you. And the first thing I would like every student of constitutions to bear in mind is that in political constitutions there is nothing new on this earth, and there is no form of government or combination of forms which has not been tried out at some time or another in some country during many thousand years past. And indeed, if I were to look for a description of an ideal free state, such as we have tried for centuries to make our own, I could get nothing better than what Pericles said of his own constitution in Athens something like two thousand

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

years ago ; and I am going to give you, familiar as it may be, two or three paragraphs from that speech, the points of which I shall illustrate as I go along.

“ Our government,” he said, “ is not copied from those of our neighbours : we are an example to them rather than they to us. Our constitution is named a Democracy, because it is in the hands not of the few but of the many. But our laws secure equal justice for all in their private disputes, and our public opinion welcomes and honours talent in every branch of achievement, not for any sectional reason but on grounds of excellence alone. Open and friendly in our private intercourse, in our public acts we keep strictly within the control of law. We acknowledge the restraint of reverence ; we are obedient to whomsoever is set in authority ; our citizens attend both to public and private duties, and do not allow absorption in their own various affairs to interfere with their knowledge of the city’s. We differ from other States in regarding the man who holds aloof from public life not as quiet but as useless. We decide or debate, carefully and in person, all matters of policy, holding not that words and deeds go ill together, but that acts are foredoomed to failure when undertaken undiscussed. For we are noted for being at once most adventurous in action and most reflective beforehand. Other men are bold in ignorance, while reflection will stop their onset. But the

OUR FREEDOM IS OUR OWN

bravest are surely those who have the clearest vision of what is before them, glory and danger alike, and yet notwithstanding go out to meet it."

Now our freedom is our own—civil and religious. We are so accustomed to it, as to the air we breathe, that we take it for granted. It would be no good talking to a fish about water, the element in which he lives. The time to talk to him about it would be when the water was shrinking and there was a chance of his having to conduct his life in a new and strange element. And that freedom did not drop down on us like the manna from Heaven : it has been fought for from the beginning of our history, and the blood of men far better than ourselves has been shed to obtain it. It is the result of centuries of resistance to the power of the executive, and it has brought us an equal justice and trial by jury, and freedom of worship, and freedom of opinion—religious and political. That old Radical, Bentham, said that the motto of a good citizen was "to censure freely and to obey punctually."

Now I think a good many of you probably have been reading one—or both—of two admirable "Lives" of John Hampden, a name always associated in this country with that struggle against an executive to secure political freedom. But when you have read and mastered John Hampden's story, do not omit to study carefully the history of the years following the execution of the King, and mark

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

the struggles of Cromwell himself when he was raised to a position of supreme authority. He found then, as so many have done, that he could not do exactly what he would, and that his struggles after maintaining a constitutional position—struggles which led him before his death to dally with the idea of monarchy, even possibly monarchy connected with himself—forced him to set up in England a military governorship of major-generals. That was so alien to the traditions of our race that it lasted but a short time, but it brought in its train, not only the Restoration, but the Restoration with much besides that the English people would never have tolerated except by way of reaction from the tyranny that had gone beforehand. That was a consequence of the only fight—constitutional fight—that was settled by force of arms in our country, and I don't think there are many better or more interesting periods at this moment in our own history for our young people to study than that whole period from about 1630 to the end of the century.

Well, not only have we got that freedom I spoke of in the country, but that freedom is mirrored for us, and crystallised, in the House of Commons itself. It is the fashion for many people, and particularly in the popular Press to-day, to represent the House of Commons as effete, as having really done all its useful work, and as being impotent and consisting largely—especially the Government of the day—of fools. Well, I have

OUR FREEDOM IS OUR OWN

been a member of the House of Commons for many years, and I will say this, without fear of contradiction by any other member of that House, to whatever party he belongs: the House of Commons as an assembly is a House where a fair judgment may always be relied upon. It has its tantrums occasionally; it sometimes does foolish things; I have never known it fail to raise itself to a great occasion. It gives the completest liberty to every individual of it, provided that it is convinced of his sincerity. The most unpopular views among the majority—views held, perhaps, by only one or two men—are listened to respectfully, so long as the House believes that honesty is behind them. There is a great tradition there of fair play to the individual—a tradition, not in writing, but handed down from generation to generation, from the older members to the younger—and so it has been, perhaps, for six centuries. And that tradition is as strong amongst those who have come to the House unused to its traditions, either at home or there, and they feel it just as strongly, as those of us whose fathers were in the House of Commons itself.

And with that tradition of the House of Commons we have a tradition now in this country, growing, I am glad to say, in these democratic days even more strongly, because it is more widespread, and that is the tradition of service in a free country by free men. Every County Council, every municipal

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

body, in the same way as the House of Commons, is filled with men who often make sacrifices to give their services, and that government is carried on in this country more cleanly, I believe, than in any country of the world. It is the rarest thing in our local popular government, as in the government of our country, to find men who fall by the way and yield to temptations that may come from the direction of corruption or undue influence. There is a magnificent tradition handed down from the earliest times in this country, of public service—service for the good of all our brothers in whatever their station of life. We have not yet wholly realised it. We are on the way to it: we are much nearer to it than we were a generation or two ago. And the end is not yet.

But mind you, Democracy is a most difficult form of government—difficult, because it requires for its perfect functioning the participation of all the people in the country. It cannot function—not function well—unless everyone, men and women alike, feel their responsibility to their State, do their own duty, and try and choose the men who will do theirs. It is not a matter of party: it is common to all of us, because Democracy wants constant guarding. It wants constant guarding, lest Democracy should slip over in the one direction into licence, and licence means chaos; and the moment that comes you get the swing in the other direction, either by reason or by force; and you get tyranny,

OUR FREEDOM IS OUR OWN

following inevitably on licence as surely as night follows day.

And for us in this country to think of having, for example, a dictatorship—a popular form of government in many countries to-day—would, on our part, be an act of consummate cowardice, an act of surrender, of throwing in our hands, a confession that we were unable to govern ourselves ; for we should only be content to sit back—our strength and courage alike gone—and watch our dictator do his work. In this country we do not want what I call the “ get-rich-quick ” mind. Speed and efficiency are very good things, and they are, perhaps, the idols of this generation. But they do not necessarily go together. Acceleration, as I have often said, is not a synonym for civilisation. It is quite true the State coach of this country may be going through heavy ground, the wheels may be creaking ; but are you quite sure that the wheels of the State coach are not creaking to-day in Moscow, in Berlin, in Vienna ? Are you quite certain that they are not creaking even in the United States of America ?

I admit a dictator can do much. When in power he may do everything. But there is one thing he cannot do, and that is create another dictator. Dictatorship is like a giant beech tree—very magnificent to look at in its prime, but nothing grows underneath it. The whole tendency of it is to squeeze out the competent and independent men and to create a hierarchy used to obey ; and when

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

the original dictator goes, chaos is often the result. We have no hierarchy in this country used to obey. Our people are independent. They have been accustomed to taking part in the government of their locality or of their country, and they realise that the ultimate responsibility for law and order is in their hands. Do you remember when Sir Henry Wilson was shot, and the gunmen tried to escape, how the man in the road with the shovel went after them? Do you remember the hold-up in the streets of London the other day, when that gallant man came down from his ladder and attacked the men although they had revolvers with them? Do you remember the taxi-driver the other day who rammed the car in which the smash-and-grab men were making off? Those things do not happen under dictatorships. Those things are the result of freedom and responsibility.

Democracy, it is quite true, has been a failure in many countries, but let me put this idea before you. Democracy was grafted in those countries on a stem of Absolutism, and the graft does not do well. It is not a natural growth, and in many countries Democracy blundered into chaos. And that happened throughout the nineteenth century, and in three great cases it had to be rescued by the strong hand—by Bismarck, by Cavour and by Louis Napoleon. And you have seen alternations—alternations of free government and of dictatorship. But for us to surrender our liberty

OUR FREEDOM IS OUR OWN

would indeed be to graft something completely alien on to the stem of an old oak. Do not forget, in spite of what is happening abroad, there are freedom-loving men and women in every country to-day in Europe. And you cannot think with what anxiety they are looking to this country to-day as the last stronghold of freedom, standing like a rock in a tide that is threatening to submerge the world.

I know quite well, when one is young one is always in a hurry, and it may well be to-day that those two alien plants—for they neither have their roots in England—Communism and Fascism, may appeal to many of you. This is a free country. You can support either creed, and you can support it in safety, but I want to put this to you. If there be one thing certain, to my mind it is this. That if the people of this country in great numbers were to become adherents of either Communism or Fascism there could only be one end to it. And that one end would be civil war, and that is, I was going to say, latent in both these creeds—I would say it is not only latent, but blatant—and for this reason. They both alike believe in force as the means by which they can get their way and set up their dictatorship; and they further believe, as you have seen on the Continent, that having got into power—and it does not matter for the argument whether it be Communist or Fascist—by force, all free opinion, all opinion that does not agree with them,

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

must be suppressed by force—in other words, kill everything that has been a growth in our people for the last eight hundred or a thousand years.

No. Freedom is not dead yet. Nor is Democracy. But, as I said when I began, it is a difficult form of government, and it requires our brains and our hearts. Some of you may have read those two delightful volumes of Mr. F. S. Oliver on the reigns of George I and George II. He calls them *The Endless Adventure*, and what he means by that is the endless adventure of governing men. Now, many of you when you come out into the big world may want, after a time, something else to do than merely make money for yourselves and make yourselves comfortable. If such thoughts come into your minds, come and help—and come and help your country. We are a long way yet from being perfect, and we want all competent and willing hands to help us, and if I might advise you, when you come into public life use your common sense, avoid logic, love your fellow-men, have a profound faith in your own people, grow the hide of a rhinoceros ; and you will find all the adventure you want, for it is, indeed, endless.

UNTO WHOMSOEVER MUCH IS GIVEN

*A speech delivered in Hyde Park at an
Empire Day Demonstration,
May 24, 1929*

THE first words that the people of Great Britain would wish me to speak to all those who are listening-in throughout the Empire are words of thanksgiving to Almighty God for the King's recovery. Everyone of us watched with deep anxiety the long course of the King's illness. His Majesty's example of patience and courage through long months of weakness and suffering drew to him the sympathy of all nations, and proved a new bond of human brotherhood. Never was the loyalty of his people more affectionately centred on the Throne than it is at this moment. His Majesty is everybody's King.

This is Empire Day, and we lift up our eyes beyond our immediate surroundings and our everyday tasks to behold the great inheritance which is ours. Our feet are set in a large space, and if the Titan has known moments of weariness, if our burdens are heavy, our shoulders are yet broad, and they have long been fitted to bear the vast orb of our fate.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

The British Empire has spread with the ripple of a restless tide over tracts and islands and continents. Pioneers, adventurers, preachers, traders : all in their day, and with their several motives, have been its architects. We see in its history the human hand that hath built it, the human lives that have been laid down for it ; but, as we study its destiny, we are bound to think of it less as a human achievement than as an instrument of Divine Providence for the promotion of the progress of mankind. Through all changes of political relations and vicissitudes of trade, it has dug channels, innumerable channels, wide and deep, for the spread of what is noblest in human achievement to the remotest corners of the earth, and one of those greatest gifts of civilisation is freedom, which we seek not only to enjoy ourselves but to share increasingly with others.

Imperial power has decked itself in many forms in the course of the world's history. But often Empire has meant loss of dominion. Governments built on foundations of tyranny and oppression have flourished, decayed and perished. The British Empire has shown, and at no time more than in the last few years, that the lessons from the fate of the Empires of the past have not been lost upon it. We have loosened the formal bonds of unity with the great Dominions. The destinies of their peoples are guided by their own Governments. No rigid framework cramps our

UNTO WHOMSOEVER MUCH IS GIVEN

conversations with one another, or with the world outside the circle of the family. When we meet together in equal freedom, we are united by a common allegiance to the Crown. In that model unity lies our strength. It is a bond of service, and it summons us to active co-operation and friendly rivalry in every sphere of life. We hold together, and we work together, not only or merely for our own material prosperity, but for the promotion of peace and the advancement of knowledge throughout the world.

We deem it no small thing in the ordering of the world, that between great communities covering a quarter of the surface of the globe the possibility of war is banished ; and instead of devoting our counsels and our energies to the prevention of war between us, we devote them wholly to co-operation in the arts of peace. The power and resource of the Empire are consecrated to this task, and no greater blow could befall the peace of the world than the disablement of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The freedom and unity, the peaceful rivalry which is the goal of the League of Nations, we have in no small degree achieved in the Empire ; and all who would embrace the wider loyalties of the League should pray no less for the prosperity of the great British partnership.

What can I say in these few moments of the great Dominions, one by one, with their infinite variety, with territories still untraversed and

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

uncharted? Of India, the land of glamour and romance, of snow-clad mountains and burning plains, the mother land of more than half the people who own allegiance to the Crown and Empire, a land brought daily closer to our thoughts by the conquest of the air? We all await with hope and confidence the conclusion of the momentous inquiry now proceeding, with confidence in the determination to find, under Providence, the true path, with the hope that goodwill and public spirit may find a response in the loyal heart of India. It has more than once happened in our history that the very magnitude of the difficulty has provided the inspiration needed to surmount it.

There are also the scattered Colonies, with peoples manifold, which form an Empire in themselves, for whose affairs we here in London are responsible—fifty million subjects of the King, ruled by fifty administrations: vast countries like Nigeria, seven times the size of Britain, and tiny islands such as Ascension, with its three hundred inhabitants: some gathered in under the Flag within the memory of living men, some, like the Bermudas, settled by white men three centuries ago. Those territories are being brought into ever closer contact with the rest of the Empire by the development of education, by commerce, by wireless, by flying, by mutual confidence and conference; and more and more the resources of the whole Empire, its science, its skill, its

UNTO WHOMSOEVER MUCH IS GIVEN

wealth and experience, are at the disposal of each part. For many generations the administration of this great heritage of many races, many languages and religions, has inspired the devotion of young men in this country. The record for hard, unselfish, disinterested work has never been surpassed by any Imperial Power, and for so long as we discharge our trust to humanity in this spirit, we need seek no other title to Empire.

This pageant in Hyde Park to-night has called up to us in the midst of the greenness of an English spring pictures of wide horizons of Canada, of Australia, of New Zealand, of South Africa, of the Irish Free State, of Newfoundland, of India and of all the Empire heritage set about the Seven Seas. Let us separate with this thought in our mind, that each one of us in the Old Country, so far as in him lies, will strive to keep these islands a fit nursery for our race, and to make service to the Empire the inspiration of its manhood.

“For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.”

THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY

*The John Clifford Lecture delivered at the
Annual National Conference of the Brotherhood Movement at
Coventry,
July 14, 1930*

GENERATIONS of men succeed each other on the world's stage ; no two are alike ; no two countries are alike ; their climates, industries, manners and customs differ ; their political ideals change with their economic conditions. Nothing seems stable. But if you look closer you detect permanent elements. Bygone ideals which have once proved powerful do not die. What is good in them continues to attract the hopes of men. An ideal which has once managed to embody itself in a noble human society and given birth to great men and great art sways our imagination and lures us on and on in the attempt to recapture it.

When Sir John Simon broadcast his first address on " The Problem of India " he went back in his very first sentence to the Greeks of two thousand two hundred years ago, and in his second sentence to Aristotle. He told us that when we come to discuss changes in the government of India we

THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY

ought to give heed to the warnings of the pupil of Plato and the tutor of Alexander. I could wish for no better illustration of the persistence of the power of the speculations of the classical world upon modern practice. No greater contrast could be imagined than the problem of governing a single city-state like Athens and the problem of governing the Indian Empire embracing a fifth of the population of the world. And yet, as we shall see, the two are directly related. It was once said (by John Addington Symonds) that the discovery of America could be traced to the rediscovery of the Greek language. It would not be beyond the powers of an undergraduate of average intelligence to show that many of the ideas which are agitating Indian reformers to-day are traceable to Athens *via* London and Oxford and Cambridge. You remember the famous saying of Sir Henry Maine: "Except the blind forces of Nature, nothing moves in this world which is not Greek in its origin." An exaggeration, no doubt. But it is the simple truth that a ferment spreading from ancient Greece has worked like yeast in the constitution of every Western state and forced into prominence political developments of the most disturbing character. Many of the problems which lie at the root of the Simon Report were canvassed daily in the market-place of Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries before the birth of Christ. If Thucydides, the contemporary of Pericles, came

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

to life again and were made Professor of History at Birmingham, he would soon be quite at home in expounding these problems and we should understand him. No one of us whose days are spent in Parliament can read the pages of Aristophanes without seeing ourselves and our colleagues drawn to the life.

It is interesting to speculate on the might-have-beens in history. Alexander the Great, one of the mightiest conquerors of all time, was the pupil of Aristotle, one of the mightiest thinkers of all time. Alexander succeeded to the throne of Macedon at the age of twenty and died in his thirty-third year. In thirteen years he shook the kingdoms of this world to their foundations, brought down tyrants from their thrones, and set up popular governments in their stead. Palestine, Egypt, the Levant, Persia, India—all trembled at the coming of this all-conquering youth. Alexander penetrated into the Punjab to the valley of the Indus. But a mutiny of his troops prevented him from pushing further his conquest of India. Thus India escaped the dominion of Greek ideals and government. Asiatic traditions prevailed ; and once again, in our own time after the lapse of twenty centuries, we are discussing the application to India of Greek ideas of majorities and minorities, of checks and balances, of aristocracy and democracy, of local freedom and federal union.

Of course, in the interval, these ideas have not

THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY

only been illustrated by experience but they have been developed and applied on a scale and in ways which it never entered the minds of the Greeks to conceive. Imperialism was not natural to the Greeks as it was to their successors. Their great thinkers were not dreaming of vast empires but of town-communities as the ideal form of political society. They were strangers also to the material comforts which we identify with civilisation. Euripides has been compared with Bernard Shaw, but Euripides lived on the island of Salamis in a cave. We must think of the Greeks as telling the time without watches, crossing rivers without bridges, sailing the seas without compasses, reciting poetry without books, and discussing politics without newspapers. And we must think of them as few in number. London would be a monstrous city to Aristotle, as Babylon was. Aristotle criticised a state which had five thousand fighting men as too large. Democratic government meant assembling all the voters in the market-place, making the laws in a public meeting, and choosing the officers there and then to carry them out.

But the very smallness of the Greek city-state in theory and in practice has provided mankind with a demonstration of the essential nature of community life which is apt to be lost to view in the vast aggregations of the modern state. The Greek thinkers, like the authors of the Shorter Catechism, were always bringing their pupils back

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

to first principles : What was all government for ? What was the true end of all the labours of statesmen ? They agreed that it was the attainment by the citizens of the highest possible degree of human virtue and well-being. They then asked themselves what form of government would best achieve this end. And it is because in the little cities of ancient Greece the most satisfactory answers which the world has known were given to these big questions, that none of us can ever keep these experiments for long out of our minds ; and for that reason, when Sir John Simon stands before the microphone he cannot escape from Aristotle, nor can I.

What was it that Athenian democracy did so supremely well that its spell is still upon us ? I take Dr. Glover's summary because he has put it all, or nearly all, into a short paragraph :

“ The Athenian Democracy was a government of citizens met in an assembly, where, without Presidents, ministers, ambassadors or representatives, they themselves governed. They created a beautiful city and a law-abiding people ; they united the Greek world or a large part of it ; they defeated the Persian Empire in all its greatness and drove the Persian from the sea. They made an atmosphere where genius could grow, where it could be as happy perhaps as genius ever can, and where it flowered and bore the strange fruit that has enriched the world forever. ‘ Whate’er we know

THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY
of beauty, half is hers.' The political temper, and the scientific,—philosophy, sculpture and poetry—Athens gave us them all in that period, a century or so at longest, while Democracy flourished."

The struggle that went on between oligarchy and democracy through this brief and brilliant period is the most fascinating page in the world's political story, and the way in which it proceeded to right-wing democracy, to left-wing democracy, to twenty-seven years of savage war, to degeneracy promoted by sophistry and rhetoric, to disunion and disbelief in the old virtues and the old energies—post-war symptoms with which we are so familiar—all this is most relevant to our life to-day, is as modern as the morning's newspaper, and its study vastly more important for ourselves.

For Greek democracy failed, and the reasons for its failure are full of instruction. The great ruling ideas which the Greeks gave to the world, ideas which England later was to absorb and spread over a quarter of the globe, freedom and self-government, social equality and civic patriotism, these were corrupted by demagogues and flatterers of the people. It was so fatally easy to think that freedom meant doing what you like, that one man was not only as good as another but equally able to fill any office whatsoever, that majorities could do no wrong, that you could make Utopian laws for your own country without regard to what other nations or other empires were doing. And thus (to quote

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Dr. Glover again) it came about that "Greeks talked incessantly of equality and butchered one another like French revolutionists to get it; of freedom, and lived on the labour of slaves and allies." Freedom of speech was stifled and public men who refused to advocate pleasures for the multitude were banished. Politicians rivalled one another in bribing the electorate. There was an unemployed problem and a policy of public works, payment for jurymen, free seats at the theatres. Those who had triumphed over tyrants in turn became despotic; those who had been oppressed became in turn oppressors; those who had denounced luxury and idleness in individuals, succumbed to the temptations of riches when shared out by the State. And by and by Plutarch records that the Athenians, from being sober, thrifty and self-supporting people, changed into "lovers of expense, intemperance, and licence."

I have indicated one of the main sources of the ideas which colour our political thinking. But there is another main and more recent source, and it is natural to dwell upon it in a lecture associated with the memory of John Clifford. If you take up a small book published recently on the *Essentials of Democracy*, by the present Master of Balliol, you find he goes back not to Plato and Aristotle but to Cromwell and the Baptists and Independents of the seventeenth century, to the self-governing congregations of the

THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY

religious bodies, whose example of democratic government it was sought to extend to the whole State. Mr. Lindsay quotes an account of a memorable debate on the principles of democratic government held between the representatives of the army on the one hand, and Cromwell and Ireton on the other. The debate was held at the Grand Council of Officers at Putney in 1647. It was taken down in shorthand by the Secretary to the Council of the Army. The case for the Army was put by a Colonel Rainboro, and Mr. Lindsay quotes a passage from the Colonel's speech: "Really," says Colonel Rainboro, "I think the poorest he that is in England hath a life to live as the richest he." On this the Master of Balliol comments most admirably:

"That seems to me the authentic note of democracy. The poorest has his own life *to live*, not to be managed or drilled or used by other people. His life is his and he has to live it. None can divest him of that responsibility. However different men may be in wealth or ability or learning, whether clever or stupid, good or bad, living their life is their concern and their responsibility. . . . That is not a scientific nor a common-sense doctrine. It is a religious and moral principle. It is the translation into non-theological language of the spiritual priesthood of all believers. Men who could say things like that have gone deep into the heart of things."

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

This is language not unfamiliar to a Brotherhood audience, and you will recognise in these Puritans the spiritual ancestors of John Clifford. Not once nor twice in the course of public controversy was Dr. Clifford described as the greatest Protestant since Cromwell. His political life was rooted in his religious life ; his championship of political freedom sprang from religious principle. He was the sworn foe of privilege and monopoly, especially clerical privilege and monopoly in the means of grace. But if he insisted on liberty and equality he did not forget the third member of the trinity—fraternity. His great work for the Brotherhood Movement proved his belief that freedom which does not express itself in association is barren. Men achieve freedom in order that they may co-operate.

In the Protestant doctrine of the infinite value of the individual soul, on the one hand, and in the assembling together of the brethren in the church congregation, on the other, you have the seed-bed of modern democracy. And many of the early reformers thought that all that was required in order to bring heaven down to earth was either to make the Church State or to apply to politics the method of government adopted by the Baptists and Independents. In the congregations of the independent self-governing churches of the Puritans you had democracy in action on an infinitesimal scale. In the Greek city-state you had it demonstrated on a somewhat larger—a municipal—scale,

THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY
in cities with populations comparable with one of our midland towns, Coventry or Leicester, for example.

Our colossal task is to take over these principles of personal participation in government, of co-operative discussion, of active consent, which were effective in these tiny groups of citizens and believers, and apply them to the immense populations of modern states and empires. The scale of operations is vastly different. There is not only this difference in size. There is also a difference in structure, with which you are familiar, between Greek, Cromwellian and modern democracies. It was characteristic of all forms of ancient societies, tyrannies and democracies alike, that they were founded on slave labour. In the ideal states of Plato and Aristotle the husbandmen, artisans and retail traders were excluded from citizenship. Similarly the Reformation churches, while run on democratic lines, restricted their membership to the saints only. We, on the other hand, have enfranchised the whole adult and labouring population of these islands, saints and sinners alike, and are attempting the immense double enterprise not only of making each citizen count as one and an end in himself, but also of asking him to share effectively and intelligently in the responsibilities of municipal citizenship and imperial government.

These are ideals which as yet have never been fully realised, neither in ancient nor in modern

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

times, neither in England nor in the United States. Democracy is still an aspiration and not a fact. It is still "an untravelled world, whose margin fades for ever and for ever as we move." What we have achieved is a democratic framework of government, which is not the same thing as a democratic society. We have perfected the machinery of popular government, and one immediate danger is that it may be seized and exploited in undemocratic ways for democratic ends. In the name of the sovereign people deeds may be done as cruel as those done by any Greek tyrant or mediæval despot. It is terribly easy for those in power to confuse justice with the interest of the strong; but oppression of the few by the many is just as ugly as its opposite.

I turn now to look more closely at some of the political tendencies of our own day, and, I need hardly say, I do so in this place not as a leader of a party, but as a spectator who stands back for an hour to gaze with you upon the arena where the battle is being fought.

To-day the future of popular government is said by its friends and its enemies to be in doubt. It has lost ground in so many countries recently that once more we are told that there is no escape from the circular movement of tyranny, oligarchy, democracy and back to tyranny again. Democracy makes, it is argued, too great a demand upon the intelligence, the energy and the honesty of average

THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY

mortals. The people, it is said, do not see where their true interest lies. It must be pointed out to them and they must be shepherded to it. If you feed the people and amuse them they will be content. What is best for them is that they should be regimented after the fashion of the fighting services. Otherwise your national affairs will fall into disorder and your foreign policy be shipwrecked.

Impatience with things as they are is widespread, but it is only in democratic countries that the voice of criticism is high and lifted up. In non-democratic countries it is suppressed and silenced and we are expected to assume that all are perfectly happy and contented because there is no criticism and all the newspapers say the same thing. Impatience, where it is vocal, springs from two sources. There are those on the right who demand first and foremost efficiency. They put it above liberty. They contrast the slow and cumbrous methods of parliamentary government with the swift and successful methods of big business. They sigh for the dictatorship of the strong man. They want Cæsarism, not democracy. There are others, on the left, whose complaint is that we have not too much but too little democracy. Despite all our electoral machinery the people, they say, are impotent, their opinions are ignored, their demands flouted. They ask that not only the captain but the whole crew should navigate the

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

ship. They want the People, with a capital P, enthroned in power, and they think the path lies through the dictatorship of the proletariat to the paradise of Communism.

These two currents of discontent have swollen to such volume as to overwhelm democracy in some European countries. Here in England also there is a current of discontent running ; but it is not yet very strong, and though it is growing I do not think it is likely to boil up and submerge the parliamentary institutions with which we are familiar. The position is being watched by our neighbours with much interest. Our political capacity for avoiding upheavals, our gift for " animated moderation " (in Bagehot's phrase), has long been envied by our continental neighbours. They will find once again, I venture to prophesy, that we shall get together and modify presently our institutions to suit the new conditions. We are not good at planning ahead, but we have a gift for improvising and compromising.

Disappointment with the working of representative government is no new thing in our midst. It recurs periodically and we are in one of the fermenting periods now. It may be uncomfortable but it is not surprising. The country in the last twenty years has been plunged into tremendous experiences. Our social ideals and our administrative methods have been challenged as never before. There is bound to be unrest when

THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY

more questions are being put than statesmen can answer. I think we shall find answers to them in England as soon if not sooner, and as good if not better, than in any other country.

Within the House of Commons itself there is a growing sense of the need of overhauling the ship of State. Mr. Lloyd George recently compared it with one of the old windjammers. Mr. Churchill is impressed with the contrast between political problems and economic problems, and with the need for handling them by different techniques. Party government, he suggests, is not a suitable apparatus for solving our industrial difficulties. He would like to see a new deliberative body, an economic sub-parliament debating day after day, with fearless detachment from public opinion, all the most disputed questions of finance and trade without caring a halfpenny who wins the General Election. This proposal has a striking resemblance to that put forward a few years ago by our young Guild Socialist friends, and I had rather gathered from their maturer reflections and recent publications that they had put aside this device of their undergraduate days. Mr. Churchill has still the advantage of a bold and youthful mind and he will doubtless work out more fully the relations of the two Parliaments in his "functional democracy" and tell us why he thinks one of them is more likely to reach unanimity than the other, and which is to be dominant. It is, I think, hardly correct to say

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

that there exists at the present time no constitutional machinery for dealing with economic problems on their merits, with competent examination and without political bias. Is not this precisely what is taking place, for example, on the Macmillan Committee on Finance and Banking? Is this not the function of the Economic Advisory Council which is not subject to vote-catching or the pressure of publicity? And is it not sometimes practised in the form of Royal Commissions which often enjoy high expert authority? Then, in addition to Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill, we have Lady Passfield, who is better known perhaps as Mrs. Sidney Webb, who is also dissatisfied with the working of the central Parliament and is also seeking, I understand, to create a companion Parliament; not, like Mr. Churchill's, for economic questions, but for domestic or non-foreign or non-imperial questions, possibly on the lines of Home Rule Parliaments for England, for Wales and for Scotland, three children of the Mother of Parliaments—who will, I suppose, keep the national purse and give the children an annual allowance.

Now I agree that these comments on our Parliamentary procedure and the constructive proposals for its improvement are important and of some urgency. We have witnessed remarkable growths and changes in the industrial structure of the country in the last hundred years; these changes have proceeded far more rapidly than have the

THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY

changes in the machinery of government, and the lag, as it is called, does undoubtedly account for not a little of the disappointment with democracy which prevails.

But there is much more to it than that. There is not only the fact that economic issues have elbowed out the old political issues ; there is not only the emergence of a party with its primary emphasis on the removal of property ; but there is among the idealists of all parties a sense of futility, and this, if you look deeply into it, is not born of the failure of machinery, but of the failure of faith. The young seeking the Unknown Country of their dreams find that the old have given up the search for it. The young write the election manifestoes and discover that the Cabinet Ministers have either never read or have entirely forgotten them. Experience is a violent, a shattering school. Leaders in office are loaded with responsibility and supported by knowledge. They acquire insight with experience. That discipline is denied the young while they remain young. Agitation unites men, action divides them—we shall find that in India as events develop. Ideals have great harmonising power, but when the machinery of government gets to work upon them and begins to fit them to the facts, it has a sadly disintegrating power. The machinery of democracy has been tried up to a point. The people have tasted power, but we are only learning. Of the making of new laws there is

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

no end. There is a saying as old as the Greeks that it is more important to form good habits than to frame good laws. There is an undercurrent of suspicion that this is true and that, like patriotism, legislation is not enough. The hopes held out when laws are framed are not always realised when laws are passed. No session of Parliament has ever been dedicated to the sole task of examining the results of its previous activities. What happens to all the laws placed on the statute book? If half the hopes of their promoters had been realised, would not the millennium have arrived ere this? There is no constitutional machinery for that sort of *post hoc* valuation. It is not the function of any Department or Minister to examine how far the laws have fulfilled the promises of their sponsors.

The early abstract economists, for the sake of clarifying their argument, invented an "economic man"—a being stripped of all human attributes except those self-regarding interests directly connected with buying and selling goods or services. One of the sources of our modern disappointment with Parliament among thoughtful observers is due to the fact that laws deal, and can only deal directly, with a fraction of a man, but, in so doing, they affect indirectly the whole personality for better or for worse. The law deals with you as a tenant, a taxpayer, a pedestrian, one of the unemployed and so forth, with a score of sectional aspects of your being; but again, to use Mr.

THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY

Churchill's phrase, there is no constitutional machinery which records and reports the results of all these assaults on human personality. And it is precisely the quality of that personality which matters supremely for the ultimate fate of the country. There is no national well-being which is not the well-being of definite individuals, of John Smith, in fact. All parties are deeply committed to intervention in the lives of the people. The goal of some is to convert the state into a universal Providence. Character is built up by innumerable acts of choice. If all or most of the crucial choices in life are made for you by the State, what then becomes of the democratic ideal of the Master of Balliol—the management of and responsibility for our own lives, whether we be clever or stupid, good or bad ?

To Aristotle, ethics was a branch of politics ; to the Christian, politics is a branch of ethics : which means that the ultimate test of law-making is its effect on John Smith's character. No Cabinet summoned to extend unemployment benefit or to borrow another ten millions to pay into a bankrupt fund receives from any Ministerial Department a memorandum on the effect of this on John Smith's personality. There is no machinery devised to measure that. I suspect that it never appears on the agenda of the Economic Advisory Council and I am sure it does not appear in the terms of reference of Royal Commissions.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Like the old economists we are assuming some imaginary "economic man," who does not exist except in textbooks and memoranda, the automatic recipient of so many shillings a week while out of employment. This, it may be urged, is the modern democratic method of acknowledging the brotherhood of man, our membership one of another. All parties are alike implicated in the measures of relief now in force. All are agreed that destitution ought not to be tolerated. But are we all quite happy that in giving John Smith state benefits in this wholesale way we are not at the same time taking away from John Smith something which will make him poor indeed?

These are old-fashioned questions and at the moment unpopular, but they are destined to come to the front again in the next ten years, and in a brotherhood gathering I make no apology for referring to them. These questions are far more important to the working classes than to the richer classes. The condemnation of the old methods of casual and unorganised methods of charitable relief was that they tended to create and perpetuate a pauper class. The destitution of large numbers forced upon the country an organisation of relief on a corresponding scale and some of the worst features of the old methods were got rid of. But have we ceased to create and perpetuate a pauper class? For that was the evil to be destroyed. I am assured by those whose work lies closely amongst

THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY

our urban and industrial populations that there is need to examine the effects of the provision of social services by the State in the last twenty-five years. Are the results we all intended being in fact achieved ? We have witnessed a vast development of protective services like insurance, and constructive services like education. I am told that there is at least reason to question :

(a) Whether the expansion of protective services along the lines at present being followed is “ freeing men for activity ” or is encouraging inertia :

(b) whether the constructive services are being developed along the lines which encourage, to the full, variety, initiative and self-exertion :

(c) whether the sense of corporate responsibility without which the good life can hardly be won for any community is being fostered by the expansion of public social services along the lines at present being followed.

The re-distribution of wealth from the richer to the poorer elements in the country by the machinery of the State has, within limits, obvious advantages. But when certain limits are passed and the drawbacks become apparent, then will come the testing time for politicians and for voters, for democracy in short. No party has a monopoly of honesty or of wisdom, and no party is endowed with an excess of courage and candour. Will the leaders who have competed with one another in bestowing boons upon the electorate compete

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

equally in telling the electors that what is really needed is something quite other than what they are receiving? A distinguished American journalist, Mr. Walter Lippman, has defined the politician as a man who seeks to attain the special objects of particular interests and who is not averse to methods of deception. Under this term he includes—the catalogue is worth repeating—the whole art of propaganda, whether it consists of half-truths, lies, ambiguities, slogans, catchwords, showmanship, bathos, hokum, and buncombe. The statesman, on the other hand, penetrates from the naïve self-interest of each group to its permanent and real interest. He expresses not the desires of the moment but the conditions under which desires can actually be adjusted to reality. The test of democracy lies in its choice of these policies and these leaders in whatever party they appear.

I think we may be saved from some of the evils which now threaten us by the emergence of voluntary associations and their employment by the State. The Brotherhood Movement is only one example of the sort of fellowship which enriches our British public life. Men group themselves spontaneously in an endless variety of social forms and in no country are they fuller of vitality than with us. The Church is one of the oldest and most widespread of these forms. And there are a thousand others dedicated to every sort of

THE AUTHENTIC NOTE OF DEMOCRACY
communal interest and enterprise. It is natural that men should turn to the State for relief from vast economic distresses and there is much the State has done to mitigate misfortune. But I prophesy that with experience of its administration we shall have a reaction from bureaucracy, and I foresee the State, in the years to come, itself making larger and larger demands upon voluntary associations to execute its will. Democracy will take on new forms. The tendency of the last few years to frown upon voluntary effort will be reversed. The rich and various life of spontaneous groupings will be recognised not as a weakness but as a strength to the State. It will give that direct expression to the human personality which is freedom, that opportunity for diversity which is the only tolerable form of equality, and that association of all the elements in the State which is fraternity, that is to say Brotherhood.

THE CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE

*An address on Public Administration delivered at the
meeting of the Institute of Public Administration, London,
October 26, 1933*

THERE can, in my judgment, be no one who is at all familiar with the problems of government, central and local, imperial and international, but rejoices in the existence and work of the Institute of Public Administration. It was born not a moment too soon. It has ten years of solid, unobtrusive work already to its credit. It is only on the threshold of the territory which it has to explore and put on the map. It was natural that its creation should be regarded with misgiving, if not suspicion. It is right that the Civil Service should be jealous of its independence, its anonymity and its aloofness from political controversy. It is characteristic of the British Public to look askance at any deliberate, systematic attempt to rationalise our institutions. To many the Civil Service is something mysterious and aloof. If it were understood, it would cease to be a popular target for the more vulgar element, political or journalistic.

CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Your conferences and your Journal have proved conclusively that there is a vast network of administrative operations, conducted day by day by tens of thousands of public servants, touching the life and labour, the health and happiness, of tens of millions of citizens, which presents problems of concern to yourselves and of profound import to the welfare of the State. I do not say they are the supreme or the ultimate problems; they are subordinate. But I could easily illustrate from the history of states and empires, ancient and modern, how dependent the State is upon its servants for the solution and the mitigation of the problems of government. The State is everywhere, but nothing moves of itself. Kingdoms can and do endure and survive for long periods a defective or corrupt administration. There is, as Adam Smith said, a lot of ruin in a country. But just as Napoleon could not have won his victories without his marshals and the Grand Army, so the boldest Prime Minister is impotent to execute reform, if his administrative machine fails him. There is not to-day, and there never has been, a competent and adequate government capable of satisfying all its critics; nor do I ever expect to see one in this country, so long as free speech is left to us. Perfect governments are only to be found where the prisons are full. But I am sure my colleagues, past and present, have often been glad that, after the smoke-screen of our perorations had blown away, there

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

remained the Civil Service to press forward and possess the land.

One other preliminary remark I should like to make about the Institute. There are many sorts of ministers. (I don't see, by the way, why we should not call the Prime Minister the Prime Servant—it might help to raise the status of all other servants !) I was saying there are all sorts of us. Lord Haldane was one of the most valuable sort—he was interested in the machinery of government, a subject distasteful or dull to some minds. I recall the help he gave in the days of your incubation. And I rejoice to-day that another elder statesman, with long and manifold experience of heavy responsibilities, Sir Austen Chamberlain, is putting his stores of knowledge and wisdom at your disposal. No minister has had a juster sense of the claims of your high calling to respect and reward.

I cannot claim to be deeply versed in the theoretical study of administration or to be capable of comparing our own practice with that of other countries. I can only lay before you with diffidence some disconnected reflections, arising from a public life which began as a parish councillor. Both as a parish and county councillor I have been brought into close and responsible contact with many branches of local and essential government. (I shall have on this occasion to leave out all reference to the great Indian, Colonial, and Dip-

CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE

lomatic Services—they would need an address all to themselves.)

The first impression made upon me, when I survey the history of our public administration, is that it is thoroughly typical of our national character. It was dominated for centuries by our intense individualism, by our preference for the amateur as against the professional, the unpaid layman as against the salaried expert. It would not be a grotesque exaggeration if I said that, until the machine age arrived at the end of the eighteenth century, we knew nothing of officials, pure and incorruptible, in this country. The revolution which brought machinery into production brought also machinery into government. One was the offspring of the other, as is apt to be the way of the machine. It is a most prolific parent.

I have put broadly the position as it was up to a hundred years ago. We had neither a Frederick the Great nor a Colbert. Of course, there were exceptions of sorts. There was an outburst of administrative energy, as of other energies, round about 1600, when Burghley attempted to relieve the misery of the time by means of a better Poor Law. A stream of Orders flowed forth from the Privy Council to the Justices of the Peace all over the country and, but for the outbreak of the Civil War, we might have ante-dated somewhat a thoroughly articulated system of central and local government in close and effective correspondence.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

But the Civil War snapped such links as had been formed between London and the villages. And so it came about that, through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the typical administrator was the ordinary private person and not the trained specialist. The affairs of the parish were managed after the service in church on Sundays or at the village inn on weekdays, by the incumbent, the churchwarden, the overseer, the constable and the parish officers. Many of these could neither read nor write. This parish cabinet made the church rates, the poor rates, the highway rates ; they preserved the peace and fixed the quota for the militia ; they regulated scales of wages and prices and saw to the apprentices. They drew no salaries, but there were fees, and possibly other perquisites. There was an annual rotation of willing and unwilling occupants of these posts, it being assumed in the English parish, as in the Greek city-state, that a citizen was a man fit to rule and be ruled. You see this clearly in that ancient British institution, the policeman. A policeman, the Home Secretary tells me, is defined as a person expected to perform, as a matter of duty, acts which, if so minded, he might have done voluntarily. That is to say, he is a good citizen who happens to have a small emolument attached to him. But we are all potential policemen, and sometimes, when the moment comes to us, we rise to the heights of our privilege.

CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE

That is precisely what Mr. Fisk, the Battersea bricklayer, did the other day. He is a perfect illustration of the old order which prevailed in the days when the justice of the peace was the cornerstone of local government : “ The whole Christian world,” said that great seventeenth-century judge, Coke, “ hath not the like office as justice of the peace if duly executed.” You have been described by another famous judge as the New Despotism, and I might speak of the ubiquitous justice of the peace as the Old Despotism. He gathered unto himself all sorts of powers, legislative, executive, judicial, which later pundits said ought never to be united in one and the same person ; powers which it has needed Lord Sankey’s Committee to discover whether you were not insidiously restoring to your avaricious selves !

The great and inevitable change came with the Local Government Act of 1888. When I was at Cambridge we had a brilliant exponent of the history of the law, F. W. Maitland, and in that year he wrote an almost passionate tribute to the Justice of the Peace. It had the intriguing title, “ The Shallows and Silences of Real Life.” You must allow me to give you a taste of it, in a few pungent sentences :

“ An old form of local government which has served us for five centuries and more is breaking up. Hitherto such government as our counties have had, has been government by justices of the

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

peace—government, that is, by country-gentlemen. This institution has had a great past, we had almost said a splendid past ; but Englishmen, unless they are taught by foreigners, seldom see its greatness, and to talk of splendour might therefore seem absurd. . . . A history of the eighteenth century which does not place the justice of the peace in the very foreground of the picture, will be known for what it is—a caricature. . . . The justice is a modest man ; he has no constituents, and therefore can afford to be modest ; perhaps he seldom knows how important he really is. He has become accustomed to hear small wit broken over ‘ the great unpaid ’ ; and, doubtless to be great and yet unpaid is a piece of aristocratic insolence. . . . But to have made men merry, this surely is not even yet the unpardonable sin ; that from age to age people have been pleased to be pleasant over their governmental institutions is surely not a fact which damns those institutions as unsuitable to the people. A joke is better than a curse, and local rulers have not always gone uncursed in all parts of the world. . . . And then it is so purely English, perhaps the most distinctively English part of all our governmental organisation. The small group of country-gentlemen appointed to keep the peace, to arrest malefactors and lead the hue and cry, acquires slowly and by almost insensible degrees the most miscellaneous, multitudinous duties, judicial and administrative, duties which no

CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE

theorist will classify, for their rich variety is not the outcome of theory, but of experience. And all the while this group shows the most certain sign of healthy life ; it can assimilate fresh elements of the most different kinds, and yet never cease to be what it has been. Aristocratic it has been from the first, but never oligarchic ; always ready to receive into itself new members who would have the time, the means, the will to do the work, without inquiring into the purity of their pedigrees or their right to coat armour. Our justices have never been a caste, nor the representatives of a caste ; there has been nothing feudal, nothing patrimonial in their title ; they have represented the State, and yet no one would call them officials. . . . Of all known forms of local government, government by justices of the peace is the purest and the cheapest."

Maitland freely admitted that a great change was absolutely necessary if any decent order was to be got out of the weltering chaos of the areas and powers of the numerous boards set up in the fifty years preceding 1888. Consolidation and simplification were urgent. Responsibility had been scattered about in fragments ; not one man in a thousand knew under how many "authorities" he lived. But Maitland was intensely anxious that responsibility should not be shifted to the centre. He knew there might be jobbery and corruption, incompetence and extravagance, but

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

he was all for self-government ; no compromise between old and new, no half-measures, no spoon-feeding.

“ The local bodies should be left to flounder and blunder towards better things. . . . There is no good in half trusting men ; they should be trusted fully or not at all. . . . Give the local ‘ authorities ’ a large room in which, if they can do no better, they can at least make fools of themselves upon a very considerable and striking scale.”

I shall not pursue that topic now. All I wanted to do was to remind you that, through all these centuries down to the middle of the nineteenth, there was in England no centralised bureaucracy such as had grown up in France and Germany. And the obverse of that is the strong local loyalties and attachments which even to-day administrators in Whitehall are never allowed to forget. This is why peers and bureaucrats are damned together in political pamphlets ; why the Englishman talks of his home as his castle ; why the traditional image of the civil servant is of an “ outsider ” laying siege to that castle and threatening to deprive its occupant of immemorial rights to life and liberty.

I pass to a second general reflection prompted by this rapid glance at your history. The welfare of the common man is more deeply affected by the administrator than by the legislator. If, as

CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE

someone said, the parliamentary draftsman refines the ministerial peroration into the preamble of a Bill, so the application of the Act to the individual person is the task of the civil servant. He has to translate law into policy and apply power and pressure to the citizen throughout the multitudinous activities of the modern state. He has to fit the shoe to the foot with the minimum pinch and squeeze. Which, in more exalted language, means that administration is the essence of government and its quality a prime condition of civic comfort.

If we compare the position in 1855, when your Service was put on its present basis, with the position to-day, you will see at once that the legislator and the administrator have changed places in importance. Relatively, there is now far less legislation and far more regulation. The vast increase in the range and detail of administration in the fields of education and employment, health and housing, transport and taxation, began roughly in 1833 with the first effective Factory Act and the appointment of inspectors. That was only a hundred years ago. The country tolerated government by the fox-hunting squire, with all his faults, for centuries, but it refused to submit to the unbridled rule of the factory profiteer for much more than a generation.

Two things of great moment happened in due course. The country transferred local

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

government from the Justices of the Peace to elected bodies, and it transferred central government from nominated to examined clerks, from private patronage to open competition. Neither operation was welcomed at first. In England, as in Ancient Rome, we have a deep respect for tradition ; we adapt old structures to new needs and disguise change under the cloak of pleasant fictions. The disturbances of 1848 had given Whitehall a shaking and the reform of the Service in the fifties was Draconian. It took many years before the grumbling died down. Queen Victoria heard of the proposals with considerable misgiving, and only gave her sanction after Prince Albert had obtained further explanations from Mr. Gladstone of the grounds upon which he thought the new regulations necessary. (Incidentally, I may mention that she foresaw the need of the interview as well as the examination, a change not made, I think, until the last twenty years.) The remarkable fact is that in three score years and ten the reformed Service has attained, among all thoughtful observers, an incomparable prestige throughout the world for capacity, intelligence and integrity. It has been said that Bagehot was the first to discover the importance of 10, Downing Street, but he had nothing to say of the Civil Service and he was writing as late as the sixties. When, six years ago, Lord Balfour came to write a new introduction to Bagehot's study of the Constitution, the Civil

CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Service had become the shock absorber of the chariot of the state, silently smoothing out "the most abrupt vicissitudes of party warfare."

You stand, as I see you, in three sets of relations: to one another, to the government of the day, to the general public. It is the business of this Institute to study these relations in a scientific and judicial spirit, and thereby to help to raise the character, the knowledge and the achievement of our central and local services, to such a pitch that they may long continue to be the envy of all other countries.

Your relations to one another are dealt with under a comprehensive umbrella known as Establishment—peculiar problems of recruitment, pay and discipline. Peculiar because you are removed from the fluctuating market for labour and given security of tenure. You have to provide services which are neither rewarded with profit nor punished with loss. You have to serve each customer alike, and all of them. The customer cannot leave you for another shop without a passport from the Foreign Office. For many goods you are the only available shopkeeper and your prices are fixed not by the higgling of the market but by what the victims will bear.

Now this peculiar sort of shopkeeping, all the world over, produces certain similarities in the shop assistants—it affects their habits, their manners, their speech and even their literary style. It is

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

risky to particularise. Your virtues are taken for granted ; they cause no sensation. It is one of yourselves (Sir Samuel Wilson) who has described you as coming up by the same train every morning from Woking to Whitehall and going home at the same time every evening from Whitehall to Woking, always seeing the same people, always dealing with the same work. You are said to see life darkly through a forest of " previous papers." You have an uncanny gift, amounting to genius, for formulating unanswerable objections to every course proposed. You are " unable to conceive," and you " fail to understand." Your official letters inform us that, on the whole and subject to correction, the radii of a circle tend to be equal to one another, and that therefore no action appears to be required. The answers to Parliamentary Questions which you provide for Ministers have, like the arguments of Sir Robert Peel, " no stays." You have taken to heart Talleyrand's advice to his secretaries : " Above all, gentlemen, not too much zeal."

This traditional portrait of the civil servant is, as you all know, libellous to-day. But the permanent problem remains. How are we to surmount the drawbacks of security, routine and a pension by devices which act as incentives and provoke mobility? How send fresh currents of energy circulating through the administrative body from the central power-house of public opinion?

CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE

The Service is stable but it is not static. New demands upon you are daily correcting the bias towards stagnation and the paralysing fear of error and risk.

In my time a determined effort has been made, by the present Head of the Service, not only to deepen the sense of corporate unity but to promote movement within the Service so as to fit diversity of gifts to diversity of duties. I know that he has sought to survey all departments, when important vacancies occur, so as to secure the best available officer. All departmental ministers, except the Chancellor of the Exchequer, think the power of the Treasury has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished. Doubtless those of you who serve in departments other than the Treasury similarly feel that your gifts too often go unrecognised. There is an inescapable element of chance in all promotion, and it may console you to know that this applies to ministers as well as to civil servants.

This brings me to the second set of relations of which I spoke—your relations to the government of the day. There are nearly half a million of you in the service of the central government alone and, when I speak of your relations with the government, I am necessarily thinking mainly of the thousand men at the top through whom contact with the legions beyond is maintained. Of the thousand (or twelve hundred, to be nearer

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

the mark), I suppose I have had personal dealings with a hundred, and it is this experience which leads me to repeat the words I used publicly on a former occasion: "I shall never forget and I shall always be proud to have been associated with you." I know that you are not likely to say that of us. Who was it said that you regard us with equal loyalty and contempt? You know a great deal and do not expect too much. You take us seriously but not tragically. You prefer power to fame; you do the work, take the cash, and let the credit go, and we have been told that there are few things a man cannot achieve if he is philosophical enough to forgo the credit. I hope you will escape the modern itch for publicity and preserve your anonymity. "The stars make no noise"—none at any rate that we can hear. I for one regretted that the editors of the Foreign Office archives should have proclaimed the authorship of memoranda written by civil servants. Publish the memoranda by all means, if thought desirable, but leave the confidential advisers of ministers absolutely untrammelled by any thoughts of publication, now or hereafter. Otherwise a subtle and damaging change in the relations of ministers and their advisers will most certainly follow.

It is easy to say that the business of ministers is the formulation of policy and the duty of their officers is to carry it out. That is the sound and logical distinction, but it is far from an exhaustive

CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE

definition of the relationship. If the Cabinet, in Bagehot's phrase, is a buckle or a hyphen between the legislative and the executive, the Civil Service is a stabiliser. It must be so when the realm of administrative practice embraces vast tracts of the public life which are unaffected by changes of government. When changes are proposed it is the duty of the Service to indicate how the settled practice will be disturbed, "in order that the parliamentary convenience of to-day may not become the parliamentary embarrassment of to-morrow. . . . Vacillation, uncertainty and inconsistency are conspicuous symptoms of bad administration." The formulation of policy, in this limited sense, is of the essence of sound administrative work. And it is the justification of the proposals for amending legislation which issue from the departments.

But, some critics will ask, what have I to say about the position when new and advanced parties come into power and propose sweeping changes? My answer is that, when such ministers know what they want and have behind them a united Cabinet, they may count on the loyalty of the Service to co-operate in giving effect to the agreed policy. It is when ministers are weak, confused and divided that trouble may arise : and that may happen in turn to all parties. When ministers do not know the right thing to do, masterly passivity may be the civil servant's wisest course. *Natura*

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

non facit saltum is a sound political proverb. Ideally, I suppose, a British Civil Service would restrain the parties of the Left and accelerate the parties of the Right, and thus keep the ship of State on an even keel. But a Civil Service which failed to mirror the prevailing public opinion in this country and hardened itself into an obstinate bureaucracy would find itself ere long, to use a phrase of General Smuts, "dynamited out of its fixed position," if less drastic measures would not suffice. Bureaucracies in the bad sense have begotten revolution from the days of the Gracchi to the days of the Bolsheviks. There is no danger in this country in that direction. Why should there be, so long as the best brains of every rank and section of the community and therefore every type of domestic and civic experience go to staff the Service? And that is what is now happening. It is one safeguard. The other is that we are still free in this country to speak our minds, and I do not see any Civil Service which is going to muzzle us. It is not from this quarter that our liberties are menaced.

I have thus reached the third set of relations—your relations to the general public—and, in view of a recent event, need I say more under this head than suggest you should invite the Public Relations Officer to contribute by and by his impressions to the Journal of the Institute? His appointment by our enterprising Postmaster-

CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE

General is only the latest example of the flexibility of our British system and its determination to shun the sins of bureaucracy. That is an illustration from one department whose ramifications are everywhere. It could no doubt be paralleled from other departments, including those which are directed to acquaint us of their raids upon our income in language so considerably phrased that the fullness of its meaning only gradually dawns upon the lay mind. Even in our Income Tax we are slaves of the national character, for I understand that the structure of the present law was built ninety years ago and that it, in turn, was based on an Act passed by Pitt forty years before.

Lover of the old ways that I am, I confess that we carry this reluctance to remodel old statutes too far and that Lord Eustace Percy, who addressed you a year ago, has made out an overwhelming case for a determined effort at simplification. The alternative is strangulation. Blood-letting by Royal Commission is altogether too mild an operation for the disease which threatens us. We might try a Commission with Sir Ernest Benn as chairman, and Mr. A. P. Herbert as secretary. But could they resolve our troubles without, for example, abolishing the social services? It is a vain dream. You cannot go back to the rule of the country gentleman. The England of the twentieth century is a very different place from the England of the eighteenth. Urban populations and mass provision

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

of services are inseparable. In a world of inter-dependent states mass organisation is assaulting agriculture, the last citadel of individualism.

When we read that the Milk Marketing Board has sent out two hundred thousand forms of contract all over England and Wales in just over a week and that all the milk to be produced in this country for the next six months has been sold, we realise that old contrasts between urban and rural industries are becoming meaningless. A farm is more and more a factory and, where the machine enters, the inspector, the accountant and the auditor, like Mary's lamb, are sure to follow. For the machine, if the friend of man, is also the enemy of freedom and personality.

Must we then accept without demur standardisation and regulation? Far from it. We know to-day the evils they have brought and will bring again in their train. We are forewarned and should set going and keep going the measures which will counter and correct them. The simplification of laws and orders and rules is the first of these measures. I am told that English law is contained in some four thousand statutes, some of them in a language which nobody has spoken for five hundred years, and in thousands of subsequent decisions. Can we prevent administrative law and practice sharing the same fate and the Civil Service reproducing the less good features of the legal profession?

CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE

We must, secondly, fight the rigidity of laws and rules and regulations which are framed for men in the mass by devices which will emphasise and protect the individuality of the citizen. If law excludes the imponderables by the front door, we must see that administration brings them in by the back. The realm of discretion and differentiation must be kept as wide and elastic as possible so as to check the process of pulverising the individual into fragments corresponding to the State departments which deal with him. This counter-process is going on but it needs to be far more vigorous. In our half-conscious, rule-of-thumb way, we have invented intermediate authorities in the sphere of industry to provide a greater flexibility than usually goes with State ownership: the Port of London Authority, the Central Electricity Board, the Race-course Betting Control Board. In the sphere of central government, the great departments draw on the experience of Advisory Committees, and the Cabinet itself on an Economic Advisory Council. In the sphere of the social services, there is not only the enormous growth of individual treatment in the work of the Board of Education and of the Ministry of Labour, immensely developed in the administration of unemployment benefit, but there is the growing use by the Government of those voluntary agencies for which this country is almost as famous as it is for its Civil Service. The real objective of all these arrangements is to rescue the

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

citizen from the standardising pressure of the State's mechanism.

When we walk out in the country and come suddenly upon one of the new main roads, broad and costly, straight as a sawn plank, driven through the silent fields, fenced with concrete posts, and traversed by the rolling lorries and the flying cars, we cannot withhold our admiration for the might and skill of man's inventive power. But how glad too we are to escape from the hard glare of the white road to the modest village tucked away from sight and sound, reached through twisting lanes and leafy hedgerows, friendly to the stranger and dear to the native.

In this work of respecting the idiosyncrasies of men, of cherishing, I might almost say, their non-conformity, their uniqueness, by giving freedom its fullest scope in a world in which certain minimum standards of conduct must be observed, I appeal to the civil and municipal servants to co-operate. I appeal to them to do so on the low ground of their own ultimate interest, and on the high ground of the welfare of the land we love and serve, so rich in the variety of its human character.

I referred earlier to Ancient Rome, and I shall end there. Were I a Civil Service Commissioner, I should give high marks for a thorough knowledge of the history of the Roman Empire. I hope the thousand chiefs of the Service, of whom I spoke, are as familiar with that history as they are with

CIVIL SERVICE, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Hansard. Ancient Rome, it has often been said, bequeathed to mankind an example and a warning, and this is most true in the context of my subject to-day. Republican Rome, like Great Britain, experienced government by an unpaid aristocracy and exploitation by irresponsible profiteers. It was the merit of the great Roman Emperors to provide a professional and permanent Service to run the empire, and historians have found the greatest work of Rome's imperial age in her provincial administration. It is a fascinating chapter and its moral is writ large for all of his Majesty's servants in 1933 to behold. Here it is, summarised for us by one of our great classical scholars, Sir H. Stuart Jones, in his "Legacy of Rome":

"Augustus and the best and ablest of his successors patiently built up, for an Empire consisting in part of small town-territories with traditions of particularism and in part of wide spaces tenanted by tribes of many races and cultures, a framework within which men could, on the whole, work out their own salvation, could be drawn together in mutual understanding, and could acquire a wholly new patriotism, linked with the great traditions of Rome, and a new spirit of public service. This achievement was due to the practical genius of the Romans, who excelled in the adaptation of old means to new ends. But their very success dug the pitfall which entrapped them.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

They mistook the means for the end, and forgot (as the best of administrators are prone to do) that the State was made for man and not man for the State.”

II

RELIGION AND NATIONAL LIFE

THE BIBLE

JOHN WESLEY

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE BAPTISTS

WILLIAM BOOTH

RELIGION AND NATIONAL LIFE

*An address delivered at the
Annual Assembly of the Congregational Union, London,
May 12, 1931*

You have set me a big, an impossible subject—so manifold, so elusive, so infinitely important. How am I to approach it? By what standards am I to appraise it? When Lecky wrote his last chapter on the England of the eighteenth century and compared the general moral character of that century with that of the nineteenth, he passed in review dress and manners, popular amusements, art, class changes, the penal code, crime, philanthropy, the slave trade, political morality, and so forth. It took him some two hundred pages to do this in the most summary way. Obviously that is beyond me in twenty minutes, interesting though the attempt would be on a suitable occasion.

Since I spend my life in the sphere of government, perhaps some of you would think it more appropriate if I seized this opportunity to reflect aloud upon the relations of Church and State, their ancient historical connection, the changes which that connection has undergone in my own time, the respective attitudes of Church and Parliament

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

to questions of faith and morals. That, too, is an important index of the relation of religion and national life. But perhaps I am prevented by daily immersion in Parliamentary activity from seeing Church and State in true perspective. And one fruit of this meeting will, I hope, be to do something to correct that drawback of my daily life.

I should have hesitated to stand here at all but for the knowledge that I, a layman, am to be followed by several trained observers and expositors. Perhaps that was one of the motives which prompted you to extend this invitation to a politician : that he might be compelled to sit down and listen while two theologians and ministers were engaged in taking stock of the country's moral and spiritual welfare. It may very well be that those of us who are always talking politics should oftener listen in church. But you must not judge us solely by the number of sermons we listen to. Some of us—you never know—may occasionally read a sermon in the solitude of our studies. And of this I shall proceed to give you proof.

When I began to reflect on the subject set for to-night's discussion—Religion and National Life—the title sent my mind back nearly one hundred years to one of the most famous sermons of the nineteenth century. It was neither by Newman nor Liddon, neither by Chalmers nor Guthrie, neither by Spurgeon nor Parker. It was preached by the minister of a small parish in Scotland on

RELIGION AND NATIONAL LIFE

the fourteenth of October, 1855, before Her Majesty Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, and it was afterwards published by Her Majesty's command. The name of the preacher was John Caird, his subject was "Religion in Common Life," his text, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

It is worth while spending a moment to examine this notable sermon as evidence of what was regarded by a remarkable lady, in the mid-current of the period to which she gave her name, as a message of outstanding importance and timeliness. Caird's subject was the compatibility of religion with the business of common life, and it was a protest against the attempt to treat religion and the world like two creditors whose claims cannot both be liquidated, by compounding each for a share. Religion was not a tax to be paid periodically. It was not a life of occasional fervours, or even of splendid acts of heroism and self-devotion, but of quiet, unobtrusive earnestness amid the commonplace work of the world. Spirituality of mind was not appropriate to one set of actions and an impertinence and intrusion with reference to others ; but, like the act of breathing, like the circulation of the blood, like the silent growth of the stature, a process that may be going on simultaneously with all our actions—in the Church, in the world ; in our grief and in our gladness ; in our toil and in our rest.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Religion, in this young preacher's view, consisted not so much in doing sacred acts as in doing secular acts from a spiritual motive. And he illustrated this by reference to the mind's power of acting on latent principles—anticipating in this what psychologists were later to make much noise about, the subliminal self. We do not think of the laws of gravitation when we move our limbs. We need not proclaim our religious convictions at every street corner. What matters is that religion should sway our motives, sustain our principles, surround and bathe our spirits like a secret atmosphere as we go about our work. That is religion in common life, and if it is in a sound and flourishing state, we can leave religion and national life to look after itself.

It is easy for us to-day, looking back upon the mid-Victorian age, to see that some such message was opportune as a protest, to take one example only, against the exaggerated emphasis upon the strict observance of the Scottish Sunday. We have travelled a long way in the opposite direction in the interval, and as always there had been loss as well as gain in changing from the old order to the new. But that Caird was fundamentally right in claiming the whole arena of life as the field of religious action is a commonplace to-day, and would be assumed in any examination of religion in relation to the national life. Religion, as we are all agreed, is not merely an affair of Christians in

RELIGION AND NATIONAL LIFE

churches ; it is an affair of Christians in politics, in diplomacy, in trade, in industry, in school, in sport. I think the popular judgment has accepted that as axiomatic.

But if we admit this claim of religion to be able to inform the whole of life with its spirit, that does not mean that the sanctifying of the secular has been achieved. What has happened is that the age-long conflict has taken on new forms in our day. The discussion of Sunday observance which is still with us is but a particular instance of application of a general rule or disposition.

Let me put the problem as it is seen by a contemporary and detached observer. I read the other day an admirable study entitled *The Englishman*, by Professor Macneile Dixon. It is a series of lectures delivered here in London last year. The best of them, to my thinking, is called "The English Soul," and the next best "The English Bible"—both germane to our subject to-night.

In Dr. Dixon's view the key to the secret of the English soul is that the reflective English mind has always been burdened with the sense of the mystery, the unfathomable nature of things, and that this is felt more deeply and intensely by our people than by any other European race. The English race is the serious child of the European family. England, he reminds us, has been called "the chosen home of moral philosophy" and the thought that a work of art may be good artistically

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

and bad morally is foreign, even repugnant to the English mind. Everything seems to us a part of conduct.

It is this preoccupation with moral conduct which has so often puzzled continental observers, who find it difficult to believe in the sincerity of our idealism, and are apt to describe it by a less pleasant name. Historical accuracy compels them to admit that we have been the champions of spiritual movements throughout the world, and the political ally of every great religious force, Protestantism and Catholicism, Hinduism and Mohammedanism. It is absurd to regard this as deep cunning on our part. It is a genuine manifestation of national character ; and if our idealism is soiled and stained when we translate it into economic and political institutions, that also we must admit to be true, and proof of our fallibility.

But come back to Professor Dixon's analysis. He contrasts the temperament of the Latin nations with our own. "The eternal conflict between Pagan and Christian thought—the English mind displays it in a measure and degree beyond all others." Into the established creed of Europe the Renaissance drove a formidable secular wedge. It was opposed by Puritanism and its triumph delayed for two centuries ; but by to-day, in Dr. Dixon's view, we are committed to humanism, to Renaissance ideals, beyond the yea and nay of discussion. And one source of our maladies lies

RELIGION AND NATIONAL LIFE

just in this, that the way of reconciling these ideals with religion has not yet appeared. Dr. Dixon puts the dilemma in this vivid way: "To stand between the apostles and the artists, between St. Francis and Titian, and give a hand to each is not easy, to follow at the same time the guidance of Bunyan and Fielding. The unresolved contradiction is still there."

I am free to confess openly in this place that I do not deplore the spread of what is thus described as the spirit of Hellenism in our midst, for it means, among other things, the growth of knowledge and the spread of art, of music, and other delights. I do not believe that we should win abiding spiritual peace by paralysing the search for truth or by exorcising the love of beauty, if either were possible. Difficult as the task may be in the life of the individual and still more in the life of the community, the reconciliation of the trinity of goodness, truth and beauty must be sought.

That there are aspects of the secular revival with which religion cannot compromise on any terms is true ; and it is the truth which the churches should be first and loudest in proclaiming. To elevate every desire, however obscene, into a good because it is desired may be the way of all flesh, but it is not the way of the Cross. And the moral anarchy which is said to pervade our youth, and which is reflected or imagined in much modern fiction and in some more serious publications, is

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

not going to be countered by lowering the demands of religion, but by insisting on them. The notion that to enlist the support and enthusiasm of youth it is necessary to condone their vices is entirely to misjudge them, and to forfeit their respect. The churches are much more likely to fail in the long run because they demand too little than because they demand too much of human nature.

The real tragedy of the position in which the young find themselves to-day arises from the collapse of the orthodoxy of past generations, and the failure to replace it by a confident coherent faith applicable to the conditions of to-day. Principles may be eternal, but their embodiment must be temporal.

For over two centuries, we are told on the high authority of Whitehead in *Science and the Modern World*, religion has been on the defensive, and on a weak defensive. "Something which has been proclaimed to be vital has finally, after struggle, distress, and anathema, been modified or otherwise interpreted." You cannot have a world war and expect to find everything unchanged. It is hard to equate the gospel of human brotherhood with embattled nations engaged in mutual slaughter. It is hard to equate the gospel of human brotherhood with the harsh economic inequalities and enforced idleness of modern civilisation.

That young men and women should be shocked

RELIGION AND NATIONAL LIFE

and stung into revolt by these features of our day is the best hope of the future. That they should riot in pleasure and forget them would be to write their country's doom. New scientific knowledge, new economic power, new political enfranchisement combine to set perplexing problems ; but though we may not give heed at once to sound doctrine, we are not incapable of learning from experience. Nor is conscience dead, though modern psychologists call it by another name. The English are the last people who are likely to be rid of it, if their history proves anything.

What is the function of the Church in a time like the present ? It is presumptuous of me to offer advice, but I am given so much that the temptation to retaliate is very strong. I can only attempt a layman's answer.

In the first place, the churches should cultivate their own garden—the garden of religious life. This is their own peculiar field, and within it they should strive to grow the finest fruits of the spirit. There is no proposition so convincing as a good life, and if a choice has to be made between St. Francis and Titian the answer should come with no uncertain sound.

In the second place, they should welcome the increase of knowledge in every branch of learning with wide-open doors. " Religion will not regain its old power until it can face change in the same spirit as does science."

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

If we believe that the world of truth is the seamless garment of God, we should welcome the progress of all knowledge as the gradual unveiling of reality. The popularity of the writings of eminent physicians and mathematicians must rejoice all of us. The revelation of the poetry of the mathematical world, of the harmonies of the innumerable spheres of the astronomers, of the infinitesimal subdivisions and motions of matter, the mysteries of growth—all this splendid drama, described with such literary power, is tremendously impressive.

But, in the third place, do not let us imagine that discoveries in the world of the higher mathematics, of physics or biology are going to remove or even to reduce our difficulties on the moral plane. It may be true that you can predict the path of a star, but you cannot foretell the conduct of a child. Nor will your knowledge of astronomy help you to pass judgment on that conduct. The realm of morals is a world neither of quantity nor of chemical action. It is a world of values. It is precisely these values of right and wrong, of good and evil, of honesty and courage, which matter supremely for religion and national life.

To be a saint, or even a good citizen, it is not necessary to be a great mathematician. There are simple truths which seem hidden from the high and mighty and revealed to farm labourers and charwomen. I was recently presented by a friend

RELIGION AND NATIONAL LIFE

with Professor Taylor's Gifford Lectures, *The Faith of a Moralist*, and it was a comfort to me to find, after eight hundred pages of brilliant exposition and dialectic, this sentence on the last page but one : " Science is not the whole of life ; it is not even the whole of knowledge, but one rather curious and restricted department of knowledge. Life would be a poor affair if there were not many things which each of us knew with much more certainty than the scientific man knows any of the theorems of his own science."

I am not despising science. I am only suggesting that moral values, eternal in their quality, transient in their form and application, are the foundation of a country's greatness. If moral values flourish in our common life all will be well with the nation. And we may feel confident, as we try to keep the vision of the Kingdom of God on earth in our hearts, that though it remains and will remain to us and for our children a land which is very far off, yet the day will surely come : " Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

THE BIBLE

*A speech delivered at the
Annual Meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, London,
May 2, 1928*

THE circulation of the Scriptures may be said to have grown side by side with our Empire, but you of the Bible Society acknowledge no limit in your work, of place or of tongue. You have circumnavigated the whole world, and you have brought to naught the confusion of the tongues of Babel. It was Milton who said : “ Books are not dead things ; books contain some potency of life, and their activity is dependent on the soul whence they spring.” That is supremely true of the Book which you circulate. It is not only mere literature (whatever that phrase may mean) ; it is not only the greatest literature in the world. But above and beyond all that, it is, and always has been, of the nature of a high explosive in the world.

I want, before I come back to that thought, to turn to one page of your report, which will serve me as a text for some of the things I want to say to you. “ For every copy of the Revised Version we sell eighty-six of the Authorised Version.” That made me realise, if I had ever had any doubt,

THE BIBLE

that, whatever may be the reason, there is nothing that can take the place of the Authorised Version in the affections of English people.

That great Bible of 1611 was the fitting climax of a series of translations. In it you have the noblest qualities of our great language wedded to great national, emotional experience ; and in the result you have a translation of incomparable simplicity, incomparable beauty and incomparable majesty. We must not forget that those companies of translators who worked at Oxford and Cambridge and Westminster had before them not only the original texts but those great versions of Tyndale and Coverdale ; they had work before them that had been done in Geneva and done by the Elizabethan bishops ; they had a version of the New Testament which had been done by the Catholics from the Vulgate ; and they had that great version of the Bible done by Luther in German. They were a company of great scholars and they had a profound feeling for the excellences and the glories of their own tongue. Their contemporaries were Shakespeare and Marlowe and Ben Jonson and Bacon and Walter Raleigh ; and what a medium the tongue spoken by these men was, in which to enshrine for all time the Scriptures ! The immense popularity of that version caused our countrymen at that time to steep themselves in it, and you find a man of genius such as Bunyan so soaked in it that when he wrote

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

his *Pilgrim's Progress* you might read page after page of it and believe it almost came straight out of the Bible.

The hope of Erasmus almost took life in that age of which I speak. It was in 1516 that he wrote these words in his preface to a Greek and Latin New Testament: "I wish that even the weakest woman should read the Gospels and the Epistles of Paul. I wish they were translated into all languages so that they might be read and understood not only by Scotsmen and Irishmen but also by Saracens and Turks. I long for the farmer to sing portions of them to himself as he follows the plough, for the weaver to hum them to the tune of his shuttle, and for the traveller to beguile with their stories the tedium of his journey." A most remarkable anticipation, uttered a century before, of what almost literally came to pass!

The Bible penetrated the life and thought of our people in the seventeenth century and transformed their daily experience. It effected this not only because of the supreme quality of the literature but because the "Spirit breathes upon the Word." To-day, if it be that the supremacy of the version of our childhood is maintained, it is not that the Authorised Version is more inspired but that for three centuries it has shaped the lives and coloured the traditions of our people, fashioned our literature and filled our memories with unforgettable

THE BIBLE

experiences of that childhood of ours. It was that version, too, which inspired so many of our hymn-writers who for two centuries past have played so large a part in the spiritual elevation of the British people.

There are many who share the fears that were expressed many years ago by Matthew Arnold that large numbers of people read no version, Authorised or Revised. If that be true, it is not for us to allocate the blame. But I do feel that much of the blame should be shared, and must be shared, by some of us who are here. Neither politicians on the one side nor ecclesiastics of many denominations on the other can be altogether absolved. I feel, and I am sure you feel, that the Bible should have the opportunity of speaking its message in common with all other literature.

Mr. Middleton Murry, in speaking of the effect on himself of reading Milton's *Areopagitica*, made the pregnant observation that when he had read it, it did not make him think of the liberty of printing but of the immortality of the soul. This is an instance of the power of transfiguration that is always found in works of genius. In the same way, to the man or woman that reads the Bible a similar transfiguration occurs: what is Jewish or Greek or Oriental falls away, and there emerges, and must emerge, the universal appeal to mankind of the personality of our Lord. It is that faith that animates the Bible Society and it is in that

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

faith that they send that Book out in all tongues to all peoples of the world.

So I come back to what I said at the beginning. The Bible is a high explosive, but it works in strange ways ; and no living man can tell or know how that Book in its journeyings through the world has startled the individual soul in ten thousand different places into a new life, a new world, a new belief, a new conception, and a new faith. These things are hidden until some man, some people, is touched beyond all others by the Divine fire. Then the result is one of those great revivals of religion which repeatedly, through the centuries, have startled the world and stimulated mankind ; and which, as sure as we are meeting in this room, will recur again.

We seem to spend so much of our time in this world carrying on our struggle in twilight or in fog : friends, and men who ought to be friends, hitting blindly in the *mêlée* and wounding men who are, or ought to be, their brothers. Nothing but the light which comes from that Book can lighten that twilight or dispel that fog. The Kingdom of God may be very far off, but this society works on through good times and through evil times in faith.

Before I close, I would say for myself, that if I did not feel that our work—and the work of all of us who hold the same faith and ideal, whether in politics or in civic work, wherever it may be—if I

THE BIBLE

did not believe that that work was done in the faith and the hope that at some day, it may be a million years hence, the Kingdom of God would spread over the whole world, I could have no hope, I could do no work, and I would give my office over this morning to anyone who would take it.

JOHN WESLEY

*A speech delivered at the
150th Anniversary Meetings of Wesley's Chapel, London,
November 1, 1928*

It is close on two hundred years since two brothers and a few friends met in college rooms in Oxford, just as, nearly a century later, another movement, which covered many years of that next century, was started by men of equal devotion and with many fundamental resemblances—the Tractarians. I quote that because the spiritual deeps call to the spiritual deeps, and no finer tribute was ever paid to John Wesley than was paid by John Henry Newman.

Wesley was a great Englishman, first and last, and an Englishman of a great century—the century of Defoe and Swift, of Steele and Addison, of the two Pitts, of Fox, of Burke, and of Gibbon ; a century at the beginning of which Marlborough was fighting his country's battles on land, and at the end of which Nelson was fighting them on sea ; a century of which Carlyle said, in one of his wildest generalisations, that it was “ a bankrupt century.” It paid a dividend in John Wesley, if it paid nothing else !

JOHN WESLEY

The younger Pitt once said, "England is not to be saved by any single man." That is true : true then as it is true to-day, and as it always has been true ; but, if any one single man stood between England and the monstrous upheavals on the Continent, it was John Wesley, the spiritual descendant, five and a half centuries afterwards, of the Friars themselves. (And I would say that if it had not been for the deep knowledge of the world and the human heart that has so often been shown by the Catholic Church, they might have lost Francis.)

John Wesley has been called "the evangelical centaur." He went ambling on his horse, with his reins loose, and his saddle bags full of books flapping at his side, reading and writing on his pilgrimage backwards and forwards throughout the land. Very different was the real man from many current conceptions of him and from our ordinary conceptions of a great evangelist. He was typically English : the best native qualities of the Englishman were in him, and were raised to such an extraordinary pitch that they became genius. I am supposed to be a busy man, but, by the side of Wesley, I join the ranks of the unemployed ; and there is enough of the old Adam in me to agree with Dr. Johnson, who knew him, and who complained that Wesley was never at leisure—"a very disagreeable thing in a Man who loves to fold his legs and have his talk out as I do."

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Wesley's genius is shown in his powers of organisation and his preaching ; but in his preaching he wanted the whole world for his parish, and he wanted to convert that parish. He never deliberately set out to found either a sect or a Church ; it was only long after his death that his society called itself a Church.

To him, if I understand him, Christianity was primarily a way of life and not an organisation. The organisation was incidental in his scheme of things, but organisation had to come in, and on that he stamped his own genius. His preaching was entirely different, on the one hand, from that of the learned theologians of his time, and, on the other, from that of the distinctly revivalist and oratorical preachers like Whitfield. It may be that sometimes he spoke for an hour ; but I think twenty minutes was much more his usual time, and he spoke with none of that sensational apparatus which belongs to the rhetorician and the emotional preacher. He was a true son of the eighteenth century : he disliked extravagance and fanaticism, he loathed sentimentality—false sentiment—with all his heart, he was calm and cool, and preached without rhetorical exaggeration. Broadly speaking, the emotional appeal was conspicuous by its absence.

Controversy, of course, he had. He had controversy with the Bishops of the Church of England. But I only mention that to enforce the

JOHN WESLEY

point I have just made, because, in much of his controversy, what he had to do was to disabuse the minds of the Bishops that Methodism was guilty of the crime of enthusiasm. The only doctrine that was valuable to him, if I understand him—and I speak with all humility here—was the doctrine that he could weave into the texture of human life. I often think that if Wesley were alive to-day some people would call him a pragmatist—a term which was unknown in his day. He was a good classical scholar, for which I admire him; but he had little patience with the intellectuals, as such, and I am with him all the way. He left no body of systematic doctrine, like Calvin; nor was he a contributor to original theological thought, like Aquinas; but he left his Journals behind him, and it has been well said—I think by Mr. Birrell—that “No man can understand the history of his own country unless he knows Fox’s Journals for the seventeenth century, Wesley’s for the eighteenth, and the Apologia for the nineteenth.” I wonder what journals will be read to explain the twentieth century to those who come after?

Wesley’s supreme legacy, as I see it, to this country, was his conception of a practical religion for the ordinary man and woman. He aimed at finding—and here I come back to that calm mind of his century—a reasoned balance between inward conviction and outward expression, individual

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

conversion, and collective worship. He was a man all for order and for authority, and yet a man of such dynamic force that he was obliged, unconsciously, to create new forms as he lived. He knew England, he knew the country of England, and he knew Englishmen. Historians of that century who filled their pages with Napoleon and had nothing to say of John Wesley now realise that they cannot explain the nineteenth-century England until they can explain Wesley. And I believe it is true to say that you cannot understand twentieth-century America unless you understand Wesley.

This Chapel in the City of London may, perhaps, seem a small monument to so great a man ; but, after all, his work was not in any one church or chapel, and it is amongst the people of the country that it is going on to-day. When he died his adherents probably numbered a quarter of a million ; now there must be something getting on for forty millions, including in that number about ten per cent. of the whole population of the United States.

The great Methodist revival of the eighteenth century created a new watershed which has poured into the reservoir of Christian experience the labours of hundreds of thousands of men and women through class meetings, through public work up and down the country, through the trade unions, and through the Sunday schools, to the

JOHN WESLEY

enrichment and betterment of our national life and of the national life of America and other countries.

This work has been going on for centuries. The question we have to ask ourselves to-day is this: "Is it going on now?" To you, as to many others, the chief danger is prosperity. Wesley knew this, and warned people against it again and again and again. It is quite true that he said, "Gain all you can, save all you can"; but he also said, "Give all you can." Numbers in a church and the riches of that church are as dust and ashes beside the daily life of unselfish devotion to the service of the brethren. In that there is a regenerating force for this country and for the whole world. I stand here this afternoon because I have hope in the strength and power of that force and I have faith to believe that it will continue.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE BAPTISTS

*From a speech delivered at the
Baptist Union Superannuation Fund Dinner, London,
January 30, 1929*

THERE is to-day a tendency to leave behind us much of that form of strife in which so many professedly religious people were engaged during the last century. It is not for us to judge them. In many ways we are not fit perhaps to tie up the shoe-latchets of those who preceded us. But we believe that in this we have found the better way, for we have discovered that there is enough for all of us to do in joining hands throughout the world against a common foe, without wasting any time in fratricidal strife. It is no sign, as some would tell us, of religious indifference. I believe it to be a sign that we are learning at least, more truly and more deeply, what is meant by that word so often upon all our lips—that word religion.

You ask me to-night to take part in a very great celebration. I do so most gladly. This Fund which forms the subject of the toast has been organised from its inception by the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, and the name of that Union causes us to think. There is nobody

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE BAPTISTS

amongst Christians in this world more jealous of the independence of the individual and the congregation than the Baptist, and they have thought it right—and, if I may say so as one outside, I think they are right—to join together for certain purposes in this Union ; recognising all the time that, important as is union for the purpose of holding together and facing the world, yet, after all, it is machinery which must come second to those fundamentals on which you are based. That Union owes a great deal to its principal architect, who was one of your great men in the last generation—Dr. Shakespeare. As might be expected, he was triumphant in his diplomacy and in his statesmanship, and he left behind him a great work for those who followed to carry on. And I rejoice to see the spirit in which, and the capacity with which, they are carrying on his work.

What is it for which you stand and what is the testimony to which you bear witness to the world ? I think you would perhaps say it is this—that you have stood from the earliest days for the completest independence of the soul. That is to say, you recognise that wherever two or three are gathered together, the Spirit of Christ is amongst them, and they, in the presence of that Spirit, constitute a Church. It is in personal communion that the individual receives the light which he needs ; and, that being so, you have no need of a priesthood,

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

no need of specific tests through creeds ; in other words, you proclaim the responsibility and the right of every man to pray and to worship as he chooses.

Now, of course, that is the one extreme of Christian faith as opposed to another with which we are familiar. And it seems to me—and again I speak from the outside, but with full sympathy—that in that belief you throw a most tremendous responsibility on the individual. And in that you are doing in the sphere of religion exactly what the spirit of the age is doing in the sphere of politics.

Democracy means nothing if it does not mean the realisation by the individual of his responsibility. If the individual fails, the body of which he is part will become corrupt, and democracy will perish. In religion, if the individual fails, the body will fail, because the individual in religion goes right back to the New Testament. He is the salt ; he is the leaven ; he is the grain of mustard seed. And it is only in so far as the individual, whether it be in religion, or in politics, can live the life that is demanded of him for the health of the whole, that that whole can live at all.

Let us consider for a moment what contribution the Baptists have made to the life of the country in those new generations that sprang out of the loins of the Reformation.* It is interesting to remember that, in the earliest days of your history,

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE BAPTISTS

as a tribute to intellectual and religious independence, you provided the last martyr, who was burned at the stake as recently as the year 1612 in the city of Lichfield. And it is an amazing thought to us sitting here that not a century had passed since that date when Dr. Johnson, who seems almost in our own time, was born in Lichfield, and that his presence was remembered in Oxford by men who were known to many who are still alive to-day. So slender is the link that binds us to those days of religious intolerance, of persecution, of cruelty.

Then, in more recent years, you had one of the most remarkable scholars of this generation in Northamptonshire — Abraham Booth. There was Dr. Ryland, Robert Hall, John Foster, Dr. Maclaren, and, last of all, and so well known to his countrymen, and whose memory is still among us, Spurgeon. But to me you would have been justified before the bar of history over and over again for the single name of Bunyan.

That independence, that individualism of the Baptists led William Carey into India. There you have one of the founders, perhaps some would say the founder, of the modern missionary movement. He sprang from amongst you, went out and translated the Scriptures into half the dialects of the East Indies, and started a mission in true Apostolic succession which has gone on from generation to generation, and goes on to this day. And partly through his labours, partly through his spirit, it

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

has come to pass that those who think with you have spread indeed as the grain of mustard seed throughout the New World, through America, North and South, through the Indies, East and West, and more remarkable still, through the continent of Europe. And, most remarkable of all, to Moscow.

That thought leads me to another consideration. I have never been one of those who have thought lightly of what can be accomplished by the Christian Church throughout the world in the way of peace and social justice and righteousness. To you whose congregations are scattered thus over the face of the globe, belongs a peculiar responsibility. You must visit from country to country, from congregation to congregation, and it lies in your power to do much to prepare the mind of the people for the way of peace.

For, believe me, peace does not come naturally to us. Baptists have always been good fighters. Man's instincts require curbing as much as those of the apes ; but this instinct will only be curbed as we curb our other instincts. Statesmen can do a great deal, but they cannot do everything. And they must react to a certain extent—and, at times, to a considerable extent—to the feelings of the people whom, for the time being, they represent. The feelings of the people are the sum of the feelings of the individual. That is where you come in. It is only as the individual becomes Christian

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE BAPTISTS

that the mass becomes Christian ; and it is only as the mass becomes Christian that statesmen can lead it into the Christian path with any certainty of power.

There are times when either the statesmen or the Press of the world lash their tails in each other's faces. When animals lash their tails, it means that one of them will fly at the other ; and probably, lest one animal should have the advantage over the other, they will fly simultaneously. That is how the trouble begins ; and that is how the trouble begins amongst the higher animals. And when the day comes that we have a democracy that not only realises what war means (and they may forget it in another generation : we have almost done so) but is convinced in its soul that it is wrong, only then will the people be able to exercise that control upon the tail-lashers which is absolutely essential to prevent the spring and the fight.

I feel confident that, so far as you are concerned, with your foreign churches and your foreign congregations, you will all do all in your power to bring your people, and those upon whom you have influence, to be fit to leaven the great lump. But that will take time. We are still in the experimental stage of Christianity. We have only been trying for two thousand years and many of us, individually and nationally, have made a mess of it. But that is no reason why we should not start again and try to do better.

WILLIAM BOOTH

*A speech delivered at the
Salvation Army William Booth Centenary Celebrations, London,
April 10, 1929*

If you think it right that someone outside your body should speak to-night about your founder for a few moments, then it is eminently fitting that those words should be spoken by the Prime Minister of this kingdom. It is one hundred years ago to-day that William Booth was born in Nottingham. It is a curious thing to see how that fertile soil of the old Midlands and the West Midlands has produced evangelists. Epworth gave us John Wesley ; from Leicestershire came George Fox ; from Gloucestershire George Whitefield ; and from Nottingham William Booth. And three of those were raised from the humblest homes : George Fox was a shoemaker, George Whitefield was a bar-tender, and Booth a pawnbroker's assistant.

One thing that strikes me when I think of Booth is the nonsense that is talked to-day about the poverty of the Victorian age. Why the Victorian age is so unpopular to-day very largely arises from the fact that, in spite of all its faults, there was among its great men, who were numerous, a faith

WILLIAM BOOTH

in goodness : there was a moral earnestness and there was a sense of duty and a performance of duty. Look at the extremes in the religious world—take Booth and Spurgeon on the one hand, and on the other Newman and Manning—there you get men absolutely different, all belonging to that great age, but all of them, above all things, men who were in dead earnest about what they did. And the result is that the critics of the day will pass away with their generation and be forgotten ; but the works of those men in human souls will last to eternity.

When I said that outside this great body no one was more fitted to speak to-night than the Prime Minister, I felt that it was the Prime Minister who should speak for the country on the debt the country owes to Booth. Just as no history of the eighteenth century is complete without dwelling on the fact of Wesley's life, so no history of the nineteenth century will be complete if it has no reference in it to the influence of William Booth on England. If I understand aright his outlook in his earlier days, it was this ; that to have churches was not necessarily the same thing as to have religion, and that respectability and sobriety in human life might really be the cloak of a sham inside. That was the reason why he went out from the Church to preach, and chose for his church the theatre, the prison, the highway, and the market place. I will say this for the Victorian age. That was all very

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

unusual, and it startled them very badly. You may remember that Francis Galton, who made so many studies in the science of heredity, after studying various ecclesiastical biographies declared his opinion that "the gentle, complaining and fatigued spirit is that in which evangelical divines are very apt to pass their days." Now there was nothing complaining and nothing of fatigue in anything Booth did. Booth's home, as was said of him, was the railway station.

He was himself—like many of the greatest men—both a conservative and a reformer. He believed in tradition and he believed in novelty. The tradition was the Gospel, the novelty was the presentation of it. He discovered, as many others have, that, important as political and economic questions are, the religious question is ultimately the most fundamental of the whole lot. And he worked deliberately for the salvation of souls, and that the souls might justify themselves by their works in this world for others. He was not one of those—not uncommon in this generation—who believe that you can redeem mankind by a constitution. He faced right up to the fact of evil.

Now we are a little afraid of that in these days, and we have banished the word "sin" from the dictionaries. You may expunge the word as much as you like, but the ugly fact remains, and will remain. Booth never discussed publicly, nor (I believe) privately, theological difficulties. He

WILLIAM BOOTH

preached, and preached the Gospel, and the military organisation which he founded suited his own character as it has historically, before now, suited the character of great religious reformers.

And yet no man felt more than he the hardships of the poverty in which he himself had been brought up. He remembered the children in the streets of Nottingham crying for bread. His own childhood was blighted by poverty ; and he was one of the men, like Lord Shaftesbury, who, once having seen and realised the human misery of that, could never forget and never lie down under it. Hence the social work of the Salvation Army. I was interested to see that one—I might say the great apostle of Socialism—wrote only the other day : “ The Salvation Army still spends in the struggle with poverty the zeal that was meant for the struggle with sin.” William Booth was big enough, and had zeal enough in him, to maintain both those struggles.

It is just about seventeen years ago that he made his last speech in this room in which we are now meeting. He reviewed his own life's work. “ I might,” he said, “ have chosen as my life's work the housing of the poor ”—and he spoke of that. “ I might have given myself up to the material benefit of the working classes ”—and he said a few words about that. “ I might have given myself up to temperance reform ”—and he spoke some words about that. “ I might have given up

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

my life to the physical improvement of the people ” —and he spoke words on that. Then he said that he might have devoted his life to politics. “ I might,” he said, “ have turned a Conservative, or I might have been a Radical, or a Home Ruler, or a Socialist, or joined the Labour Party, but— (and this is a characteristic remark)—I might have formed another party.”

I rejoice, for the sake of the world, to think that he chose another part. In all these things which I have named—in housing, in drink, in crime, in disease—he and the Army have fought, and are fighting their fight. But the object to which his whole life primarily was devoted was one of which he used these words : “ The object I chose all these years ago embraced every effort containing in its heart the remedy [that is the point] for every form of misery and sin and wrong to be found on the earth and every method of reclamation needed by human nature.”

I would only say one word in conclusion. There are many forms of spiritual endeavour in the world. There are diversities of gifts. God fulfils Himself in many ways, and His love is far wider than our minds. To-night we thank God for William Booth, for a man whom all Christendom to-day recognises as one of the world’s great religious leaders.

III

THE WEALTH AND THE GLORY OF ENGLAND

THE LOVE OF COUNTRY THINGS

THE COUNTRY BACKGROUND

OLD SARUM

COUNTY PATRIOTISM

THE ENGLISH HERITAGE

THE WEALTH AND THE GLORY OF ENGLAND

*A speech delivered on
receiving the Freedom of the City of Winchester,
July 6, 1928*

I WANT to say a word or two to you this afternoon—and there could be no more suitable place than Winchester to say it—of my desire to preserve the beauty of our country. There is nothing meritorious in such a desire. It is the wealth and the glory of England, this beauty which has been saved through the centuries. There could be nothing more disastrous, nothing more wicked on our part, than to waste it, to dissipate it, and to destroy in our profligacy a priceless and irreplaceable heritage.

I have been asked, as all people in my position must be, to undertake many salutary reforms: to reform the calendar, to make the Channel Tunnel, to repay the National Debt. But you may reform the calendar without changing our climate; you may make a Channel Tunnel to enable people to go and buy dresses in Paris; you may pay off the National Debt and, as many economists tell us, you will be no better off when

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

you have done it. But to preserve the beauties of our country, that is something worth living for.

This, I think, is the right moment to speak of these things, for about a hundred years ago we had a perfect epidemic of ugliness that began with our industrial system, and there have been symptoms in recent years of the same thing happening again. I read the other day the words of a well-known architect who said : “ It is no exaggeration to say that in fifty years, at the rate so-called improvements are being made, the destruction of all the beauty and charm with which our ancestors enhanced their towns and villages will be complete.” There is nothing inevitable in this world unless you choose to make it so. I think we have two duties ; and we would all agree in this, to whatever parties we may attach ourselves politically. Those two duties are to preserve the best of the old in our country, and to make sure that we only perpetuate the good in what is new. Very elementary, that ; but, like a good many elementary things, very true. If we cannot make works of genius—and I do not say we cannot—let us take all the greater care to preserve those we have.

These works that we have make a double appeal to us. They appeal to us through the history that is in them. They are biography. And they appeal to us through their own inherent beauty and through their settings. In Winchester you know these things full well. Here you have

THE WEALTH AND GLORY OF ENGLAND
history, and you have it enshrined in a form that charms the eye and refreshes the spirit. The relative position of Winchester to other cities in England may have changed. You may not have increased as other cities have. But you are surrounded here in your daily life by the evidences of a splendid greatness, not only in books and manuscripts but in brick and stone and cloister and mead ; and you have the works here of generations of men who wrought as our ancestors did with passion and with enthusiasm, and who compelled the material things of life to record the spiritual life that went on in the generation that composed them. I would like to say how delighted I was with the tribute you gave me—the beautiful casket and scroll—and to think they were the workmanship, in design and in making, of your own people. For too long people have forgotten what a genius there is in the ordinary people of this country, in music and architecture and in art. To my mind there is no more encouraging feature of these days than the way in which, after these gifts have been long submerged, they are beginning to come up again. For, after all, the English stock is a true stock ; and our people are the same people as those who built our cathedrals and our village churches : who carved the sculptures and who carved the screens inside them. The talent is there and it is beginning to come out, and every time I see it come out, I rejoice.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

No country is more beautiful than England. And its charm is not only in the perfection of so many of its buildings which survive, but in its green seclusion, its aloofness from noise and dirt and smoke. It is the complete contrast between that and much of the life that goes on in this island that appeals to the souls of men. It appeals not only to those who know and love the country, but to tens of thousands who have never had the opportunity of enjoying it, but who could enjoy it, and have got these sparks of love inside them if they could have the opportunity of having them fanned into life.

That leads me to meditate on another subject : we must take care that this ultimate peace and seclusion is not destroyed by the motor. The motor threatens many places which have been left aside by the railways. There is no corner safe from them, especially as motoring becomes more popular and the motor-coach has come into existence. Let us remember that the motor-coach can perform a very great service, because it enables people who could not afford to motor in any other way to get about the country and to see beautiful things. But let us strike the note of warning. It is possible to see beautiful things without destroying their beauty for other people, and that applies to motorists of all kinds. I think in time probably the manners of the less careful, shall I say, of the motoring community will

THE WEALTH AND GLORY OF ENGLAND

improve. There will be a code. It will come. I remember that when I was young it was no uncommon thing to see people spitting in trains and tramcars. They do not do it now. In the same way, I have every confidence that, as our people get more thoughtful for others, the day will inevitably come when motorists of all classes will cease to leave litter about in their train in the country, and where they have been lunching or dining in the woods they will take their own refuse away with them. I often feel that if Dante had been alive now there are many parts of England where he would have liked to put the notice: "All cars abandon, ye who enter here." It may well be that, for the greater preservation of some of our rural beauties, the motorist will in time be content to walk to the spot he desires to reach and leave his car in some place where it will cause less desolation.

I have said these things about beauty because I want to congratulate Winchester people on the work they have done in recent years. They have realised these things of which I have been speaking, and they have taken care that in their own housing and town planning they will do nothing to destroy the beauties of their ancient city. I am told that your garden suburb is one of singular charm, and you have also been fortunate in the Great Cloister of the College—the memorial of five hundred Wykehamists who were found faithful

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

unto death amid the manifold chances and changes of the Great War. That was a high and daring enterprise ; it was entrusted to a man of genius, and the highest praise you can pay it is to show that in your eyes it is worthy of its place and its purpose. I make no apology for having spoken of these things, because I want to make the occasion of my visit the opportunity of giving such currency as my words may have to what Winchester, of which I am the youngest citizen, has done. I do so in the hope that your example may spread to the towns and cities of England.

I hope there may arise in our time some successors to William of Wykeham who will do big things in a big way, and, in his own famous words, will “ bend the shoulders in compassion and prepare to spend with all their might their wealth and work for the health and relief and benefit of their fellow-men.”

THE LOVE OF COUNTRY THINGS

*A speech delivered at the
Ceremony of handing over Haresfield Beacon to the
National Trust,
January 10, 1931*

FROM my garden on a clear evening, lying like an opalescent bar of blue against the sky, straight, rigid, like the Apennines seen from the Plain of Lombardy, the whole length of the Cotswolds, cut only by Bredon in the middle and by the Malverns at the end, lies exposed to my view. Standing on Haresfield Beacon, I see, broadening out on her way to the sea, the river on whose banks I was born, the river that, age-long, has divided Celt and Saxon in their secular strife that now, I hope, has ended. Beyond the river, you look out from the beacon on to the great Forest of Dean, the cradle of the iron trade, with which I have such long and so many associations ; just as the country that lies to the east is the cradle of the wool and cloth trade, that helped to make this country what she became industrially in later years. It is, indeed, a chosen and a favoured spot. The great beauty of these high places is that there can have been but little change in the outline of the

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

landscape in the face of the valley since the legions piled their arms almost on this spot, after their long march to relieve those who were keeping watch and ward over that Welsh frontier—the frontier which my people, further up the valley in Shropshire, watched and helped to guard for centuries and centuries.

Why is it, one is apt to ask on an occasion like this, that people come forward to make these gifts, and why should it be necessary to preserve spots like this? I think it answers to a very deep and profound instinct of the English people. We have become largely an urban folk, but there lies, deep down in the hearts even of those who have toiled in our cities for two or three generations, an ineradicable love of country things and country beauty, as it may exist in them traditionally and subconsciously; and to them, as much as and even more than to ourselves, the country represents the eternal values and the eternal traditions from which we must never allow ourselves to be separated.

But what has really wrought the change has been modern transport—not the railways, but the motor-car and the motor-bicycle. It has enabled people in the towns to build their houses all over the country-side; it brings into the country people from the towns who had no facilities for such journeys and such visits until the last twenty or twenty-five years. Among those who come and

THE LOVE OF COUNTRY THINGS

seek their comfort and their solace in the country, there must yet be many in whom the rural tradition is but dim, and we have to protect the country-side until such time as the education of our people has taught them all to love the country in the same way as most of us gathered here love it—in their hearts and in their souls.

There is one other thing that modern transport has done and which began with the railways; it enabled all kinds of goods to be taken out of the district where they are produced and transported into other parts of England. Our country-side owes so much of its beauty to the fact that in the old days people were only able to build their houses and their farms and their cottages of materials which belonged to the district and harmonised with the landscape until it made that perfect, complete and unified whole which we love so much in all parts of the country, and in none more than in the Cotswolds. If a man wanted to build in the Cotswolds he got Cotswold stone for his walls and roof, and you could never see that abomination of the red tile or the Welsh slate mixed with the Cotswold stone.

In the same way, in my country, what do we do? We are a timber country with a red sandstone soil. We build the foundations of red sandstone, cut down our own oaks for the timber, fill up the timber framework with wattle and daub, and for the roof-tree we use our own straw. There is

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

nothing in this world that is more beautiful or that mixes better with the landscape. It is not a question of age that makes a building harmonise with the landscape ; it is using the materials that look at home, and not alien. There is more than fancy in this.

It is to cultivate that eye for beauty, that sense of rest and peace, that we rejoice that a place like this has been preserved and will be preserved for ever. We hope and believe that, as more people get out into the country-side, they may realise these truths and may get comfort for themselves in that unequalled, unexampled and unparalleled beauty of the English country-side. If that be so, we may feel to-day that we have set our hand to a noble work, and a work whose fruits will last as long as this country stands.

THE COUNTRY BACKGROUND

*From a speech delivered at the
Worcestershire Association Annual Dinner in London,
February 26, 1929*

I THINK to-night my chief debt of gratitude is to my friend and colleague the Chancellor of the Exchequer [Mr. Winston Churchill] for his presence here and for the beautiful speech he delivered to us. Although not a Worcestershire man, he is really sprung from the soil of Oxfordshire, which is not very far off, and has some of our happy characteristics. We country people have, by the mere fact of our birth and sojourn in the heart of England, learned something which stands us in good stead in the strange life of politics in which we are both immersed. I learned very early that a Worcestershire man cannot be "druv." The Chancellor knows the same is true in Oxfordshire. The other day we found ourselves side by side in the House of Commons, and the mood of that House recalled to us some of the peculiarities of the people amongst whom we were brought up. I well remember what an old drover said to me on the road one day. When driving some pigs to market, he was experiencing more than the usual

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

difficulty in getting them along the road—it was more than forty years ago—and he said to me : “ A hard thing to drive many on ’em very is a pig.” I whispered that to the Chancellor, and we surrendered !

When you add to that the fact that we all of us come up from our native shire quiet folks, silent, not giving to wearing our hearts on our sleeves, not confiding in the first stranger we meet, never believing a word that is said to us, we have some of the essential qualities for success in politics. When a man tells us (which they may seldom do) what wonderful fellows we are, we say naturally, “ What is he getting at ? ” And when he tells us that we are the biggest fools he has ever met, we simply wonder what he knows about it, and we don’t mind. I think those who to-night have touched on the training we country people receive, and have spoken of it as a training which is helpful to us in our careers, have remarked a very profound truth and one which has always impressed itself on me.

It is, as the Chancellor said, the background—the constant, consistent, persistent background—of the old country life that is so strength-giving and so refreshing. Picture to yourselves the House of Commons on one of those rare occasions when things are not going well, when tempers are rising, and when observations which had better not be reported are flashing across from one side of the

THE COUNTRY BACKGROUND

House of Commons to another : when possibly those who dwell beside the Clyde seem so different from those one has known on the banks of the Severn. It is in those moments that the lines of the poet which I have quoted so often before in connection with our county come back to our mind :

“ In valleys of springs of rivers
By Ony and Teme and Clun,
The country for easy livers,
The quietest under the Sun.”

The contemplation of that takes one far away from the turmoil in which one is, and enables one to pass through the fire unscathed.

Whether it be the case or no to-day, one yet has a dream that in those ancient hills and valleys there still broods that peace that one once knew so well. I remember only the other day a lady of great distinction and of great power said to me : “ A man in your position can never retire—you may die, but you may not retire.” I have not the slightest intention of doing either at present. But one would not be a true son of the soil if one did not carry at the back of one's mind a hope that the day might come, some time, when one might be spared for a few peaceful years of life once more in that country in which one was brought up, to look out once more upon those hills, and ultimately to lay one's bones in that red soil from which one was made, in the full confidence that

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

whatever may happen to England, whatever defilements of her country-side may take place, whatever vast buildings may be completed, whatever disgusting noises may be emitted upon her roads, at any rate in that one corner of England the apple blossom will always blow in the spring ; and that there whatsoever is lovely and of good report will be born and will flourish to the world's end.

OLD SARUM

*A speech delivered at the
Unveiling of the Memorial Stone on the site of the old
Parliamentary Tree at Old Sarum,
June 12, 1931*

To walk at nightfall, as I have done, on the Wiltshire Downs, is to be conscious, as in hardly any other part of the country, of the presence of countless generations of our predecessors, the pitmen, the men who built Stonehenge, peoples who to us seem so ancient, and yet are so modern in the procession of races that have passed across these islands since the first population entered them by land from the continent of Europe as the ice cap moved over at the termination of the glacial period.

Through much of this time, in one form or another, the hill on which we are gathered has stood, known, a mark among men. It was here in those old Celtic days ; it was stormed and captured by the Romans ; and when their legions were called home, and Britain was left dependent upon herself, it became the prey of the ravaging Saxon. Here, as he established his kingdom, Egbert summoned his wise men. (It is a curious

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

thing that Parliament is never summoned together to-day as the King's "wise men".) It was afterwards captured and burned by the Danes, and not far away the subjection of England was acknowledged to the Norman Conqueror.

It was along with this that the beginning of the end of Old Sarum came. It was brought about by a kind of struggle, as it were between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, the power of the Church and the militaristic feudal nobility. The Church moved, and with the Church, in time, everything moved. Richard Poore, a famous name in his day, was the bishop by whom the great cathedral was raised, and the ecclesiastical centre of this part of England was moved from Old Sarum to New. At the same time that those exquisite cloisters at Mont St. Michel in Brittany came into being, arcades of exactly similar architecture were being raised on this side of the Channel by the builders of Salisbury Cathedral. I like to think, on this lovely summer afternoon, of the procession that took place from the castle when they bore William Longespee to his last home in the new cathedral: the castle here; the new cathedral shining white; and the storm that broke, but which had no power either to dim or extinguish the torches which accompanied that great cortège. New Sarum began, with its new life and buildings, and Old Sarum began to crumble. The great feudal powers in England gradually fell, the face

OLD SARUM

of the country changed, and in time England was domesticated when her internecine strife stopped.

Perhaps people in Wiltshire like to think of the later Wiltshire, and of the men she produced, so different from those of the early battles and struggles. There are four country parsons in Wiltshire whose names I should like to commemorate ; for, after all, the English country owes more than it can ever repay to her country parsons and those who sprang from her country parsonages. My four are an interesting collection. There was Hugh Latimer, later to be bishop of my own diocese, little thinking of the fires of Smithfield in his peaceful Wiltshire vicarage. There was Richard Hooker, who had a country living given him in Wiltshire that he might have leisure and repose to work on his *Ecclesiastical Polity*. For a time there was George Crabbe, the great realistic poet ; and there was the saintly George Herbert, whose figure must have been so well known to country people in the district, as he walked twice a week from Bemerton into the cathedral city.

All the time that those men were living the grass was growing in Old Sarum, the last buildings had fallen down. Yet for five hundred and thirty-six years, into the lifetime of the fathers of many of us, Old Sarum returned her two members to Parliament. In the long roll are many names not unknown to fame. There is one that stands out far above the others, the name you have rightly

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

thought fit to commemorate on the tablet—William Pitt, the Great Commoner, afterwards Earl of Chatham. I have not the presumption nor the time to speak to you about William Pitt. I should want all day. It will suffice to say of that most remarkable man that it is difficult to summarise what his power was or wherein it lay. There were no popular newspapers then. Parliamentary reporting was practically non-existent ; and we do not know with any accuracy what his speeches really were. We have to depend for our knowledge of them upon the impression they made on his contemporaries. We do know that impression was tremendous, that his personality was almost unique, and that there has never been in the House of Commons a man who dominated it more. But his fame to us chiefly rests on four years of power which began a hundred and seventy-five years ago. He found England hopeless, dejected, with no courage, and, as was thought, with no future. It was a time whose pessimism was such that the pessimism of to-day would have seemed optimism to it. In four years he left the country full of fire and full of spirit. He projected his own tremendous personality into the brain and arm of every Englishman, from the St. Lawrence River to Calcutta. He fired the country with a new spirit. He made the English people once more conscious of themselves and their destiny. As time goes on, and the more

OLD SARUM

history is studied, the greater will be that strange and lonely figure. If Old Sarum had no other claim to fame in these islands, it would have it in this, that it sent William Pitt for the first time to the House of Commons.

Old Sarum was one of the many boroughs in England which were called "rotten boroughs." I am going to say a word for the "rotten boroughs." Let us not condemn a system until we have looked at the fruits of it. After all, a very great proportion of the House of Commons was for centuries sent there by those boroughs. And what did they do? They watched over the growth of England from her earliest struggles to a century ago. They saw old England through the Wars of the Roses, which broke up the feudal power in England and brought to an end the old Plantagenet nobility. They saw England through the Reformation, which established our religion in this country in the form in which we know it, which created the new nobility, and led directly to the Elizabethan age, in which the spirit of modern England, the spirit of the England whose influence was destined to penetrate the new world and all the world, was sown. They brought us through the Parliamentary conflicts of the seventeenth century and established the Protestant Succession at the end of it.

They kept their last work for, perhaps, their greatest. It was the tenacity of Parliament, largely chosen by those "rotten boroughs," that stood

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

for a generation between Napoleon Bonaparte and world power. Having done that, there was no more for them to do. They had seen the country through a crisis as great as, but much more prolonged than, the conflict we have so recently passed through; and with the passing of the Napoleonic age and the coming of reform, the work of the "rotten boroughs" was done.

To us, they and all they stood for belong to a past we would not recall if we could. They handed over for the new age the new England—the England that was becoming industrial. There was no room for them. They went out and no words were bad enough for them. Yet I sometimes think the time may come when our enlightened posterity may think it just as inconceivable that men should be returned to Parliament by making promises they know they can never fulfil, as we regard it impossible that men should be returned for rotten boroughs.

Coming from the House of Commons this afternoon, I look round and ask myself: What is the site value of Old Sarum? The site value arrived at by any valuer (in spite of notices, "building land for sale") can be but small. But the value to us and to all England is infinite. The spiritual site value is beyond all computation. I cannot help feeling that this afternoon there may be, in the air surrounding us, countless hosts of those who have during the centuries worked for

OLD SARUM

England, perhaps died for England ; who have seen these manifold changes ; and who, seeing us gathered here, ask the question, “ Is all well with England ? ” I think we may give this reply : “ Yes, it is, if each one of us in his own avocation keeps a true reverence for the past and the works of his fathers, has faith in the future, does not trouble himself so much about other people’s responsibility, but resolves, so far as he can to do his duty.”

COUNTY PATRIOTISM

*From a speech delivered at the
Annual Dinner of the Yorkshire Society in London,
November 8, 1933*

As I entered the room to-night I met my old friend, Lord Bingley, to whom I said: "George, tell me something about Yorkshire." Lord Bingley's answer was: "It is the only county in England and you are jolly lucky to be here."

I am afraid that in that observation the whole soul of Yorkshire was contained. But I have a confession to make. I am a Victorian. When I was young, I lived as everybody else did at that time, in the centre of a circle with a radius of about ten miles—so far as a pair of horses could draw me. Beyond that I hardly ever went, and I was isolated from other parts of England in a way impossible to conceive by those who have only known England as a country of motor roads and motor cars.

Yorkshire was a long way off from me, and I only learned fragments about it. I knew, for instance, that just as my old friend John Gilpin rode to the "Bell" at Edmonton, so Dick Turpin rode to York. I knew also, from abdominal experience on the Sabbath Day, about Yorkshire

COUNTY PATRIOTISM

pudding. I had heard of Doncaster, but not in association with the Moor—rather in association with butter-scotch.

I had another association with Yorkshire. There was a stalwart farmer who lived near me, and one afternoon I remember his asking some other farmers to shoot with him. One had the misfortune to shoot him in the leg. He said nothing, but two years later, when the party were shooting again, he shot in the leg the man who had shot him. I said to a friend of mine, "Why did he do that?" And the answer was, "He is a Yorkshireman."

I also remember at an early stage of my life hearing a Yorkshire choir. It was a revelation. I remember saying that we could match their sopranos and altos and tenors elsewhere, but that the first time I heard the basses joining in at the Leeds Festival I thought that there were no basses like Yorkshire basses in England or in any country I had ever been in.

I had one or two literary associations with Yorkshire. I read *Wuthering Heights* at an early age, and I also read about Mr. Squeers. But a little later came another association. I remember going at the age of about ten on a long journey to Birmingham to see twenty-two of the Midlands play cricket against an eleven of England, and there were two glorious men there whom I shall never forget—Tom Emmett and George Ulyett. I was near enough to hear some of Tom Emmett's jokes,

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

and I only wish I could repeat them to-night ! And when my own little county of Worcester first obtained first-class cricket status, I remember that the hand of fellowship was first thrown out by Yorkshire. Before any other county in England that great sporting county gave us a match.

That is a strange medley of recollections. But I think it only right to repeat them because I have always noticed later in life that ardently as the fire of local patriotism burns in most Englishmen, it burns perhaps most ardently in the North, and among Yorkshiremen more than in most of the English counties.

It is a very glorious thing when local patriotism is inborn and inherited. But you can also have instances of the keenest patriotism of that kind among children by adoption. I think of the way Belloc and my cousin Kipling have taken Sussex for their own, and have written about it as though they had been there for generations. John Burns, a Scot, adopted London as his spiritual home ; and an extreme Left Wing Socialist in the House of Commons has told me, almost with tears in his eyes, of the Trent valley, from which his family came.

You will find the same thing when you go to the Dominions. Nothing struck me more, at the time I travelled with the Prince of Wales in Canada, than the way people would drive miles to meet our train, would chat with us on the platform—

COUNTY PATRIOTISM

and then you would hear from a voice in the crowd : “ Good old Blank ! ”—naming some little town or village in some part of England.

No matter what a man's conversation may be on the platform or what air of cynicism he may assume as his shield in daily life, yet underneath that surface, in ninety-nine Englishmen out of one hundred, there will be a love, which he sometimes cannot and sometimes will not explain, for the home in which either he at one time has lived or his parents or grandparents have lived before him.

Going about the country and talking as I do with all kinds of men, I have always been struck by that desire (you will find it almost universal—it may be with railwaymen, it may be with business men) to get back when work is done to the old home, to have a little bit of land, a little cottage.

One asks where this desire comes from. I myself always believe that it is very largely ancestral and subconscious. It naturally could not exist in a nomad people, but you will always find it in a settled people. You may be patriotic to your own country ; but there is a deeper, more whole-hearted patriotism to your own corner of it.

Most of us have in our veins Scandinavian and Saxon blood. That accounts for that curious familiar thrill which so many of us feel when for the first time we find ourselves among the eternal snows or for the first time we sniff the misty air of

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

the sea. I am convinced myself that it strikes some chord that goes back a thousand years, to the time when our ancestors lived in a country which was under snow half the year, or came from the Friesian coasts where the waves are always rolling to the shores in the mists of the North Sea.

The cricket field provides a modern illustration of the old spirit of county patriotism. After all, when the White Rose and the Red fought at Barnet or Tewkesbury, there was no more sternness in that fight than you can see to-day in the battles of Old Trafford or Bramall Lane. In the same way you see it in the football world. It is a great deal more than taking an interest in a particular team of gladiators. Your concern is the particular team that bears the name of the place from which you come and which you so often believe to be a better place than anywhere else could be. I am told that there is just as strong and tenacious a local loyalty and affection in the big towns of Yorkshire as there is in the country districts. I rejoice to see this spirit, because I believe it is a spirit to indulge in which not only does us no harm, but helps us to stand on our toes and to wave our tails.

THE ENGLISH HERITAGE

*An Introduction written for a series of volumes
published under this general title by Longmans,
Green & Company, and edited by Viscount Lee
of Fareham and Sir John Squire*

I HAVE been asked to write an introduction to a series of volumes to be published under the general title of *The English Heritage*. I think the editors and the publishers are to be warmly congratulated on their enterprise, and I find a peculiar pleasure in contributing a few words of welcome in a preface in which I may use the word English without fear of interruption, and speak of England without hearing the acidulated suggestion that I should say Britain.

These books are the more needed because much of what they treat is changing under our eyes, and it may be of interest to our children to look to the rock whence they are hewed ; and to others it may be a revealing of the Englishman and of his heritage, for he is not apt to speak before strangers either of his land or of himself, and when he does the less Englishman he.

The choice of subject appears to me to be singularly happy. Think, for a moment, of the centuries

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

packed into a little volume on "The County Spirit." That spirit, tranquil, unperceived, and apparently forgotten in our cities, leaped in a moment into a flame which swept across the battlefields of the world. Quickened, revived, it is in our bones, as it has been since our counties were carved out of the dissipating fragments of the Heptarchy.

Last Whitsuntide I was a pilgrim among our graveyards in Flanders and on the Somme. In one of the most beautiful, where all are beautiful, I met three other pilgrims, large silent men. Two carried baskets, and one was rapidly scanning each headstone and occasionally stooped to the ground. I approached them, and we spoke together. They had brought out from home a quantity of small white-enamelled tablets with spikes affixed, the device thereon a red rose and the legend, "They win or die who wear the Red Rose of Lancaster," and the stooping man had been placing one at the headstone of every grave which held a Lancastrian soldier. So might their ancestors have murmured the same words over the bloody fields of Barnet and of Tewkesbury.

Happy, too, is he who writes of "The Parish Church." In variety, in beauty of architecture and of situation, they are incomparable. But the parish itself has become a unit so small as to be almost unnoticed in these days of rapid locomotion. Nothing is harder for the post-motor generation to realise than that in an age of horse-drawn vehicles

THE ENGLISH HERITAGE

you lived at the centre of a circle with a six-mile radius, or on special occasions one of twice that length. It was impossible for people to go away for week-ends or to visit friends in the next county on a Sunday. The parish church which only opened on Sunday in the days of my childhood became, in fact, the meeting-place of the neighbourhood on that day, and I can see once again the pony cart and the landau on the road, people in knots of two or three coming down the lanes, and the little crowd that gathered in the churchyard, discussing the events of the past week, while the peal of bells, whose music had been the companion of the last half-hour of our walk, yielded to the urgent shriller note of the five minutes' bell. Then the smell of freshly-baked loaves in the porch, waiting for distribution after the service, the baize door, and we passed into the church to the big pew in which I spent so much time counting the ten torteaux in pile of the Episcopal arms in the east window, and trying to catch the wandering eye of one of our servants in the gallery. Most of the men in the congregation came in tall hats, and the older labourers still wore their smocks.

More than fifty years have passed, and this picture of a vanished England comes before my eyes more vividly each year I live.

But no less happy is the task of him who writes of "The English Road," and it is well that our children should know something of those roads

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

their fathers tramped and loved as did their fathers before them for forty generations. Fifty years hence may be published an up-to-date series of such books as we now offer under the title, " Our Heritage and what we made of it."

I could show you many a ten or twenty miles of road in England where every turn opens out a fresh picture to make you draw in your breath with sheer delight, where the roadside timber is yet undisturbed, and where the black-and-white cottage at the bend, with its garden scented with gilly-flowers, makes such an awkward corner for the motorist ; and here and there the little inn, even as it was when Glutton met Peronel of Flanders in the days when Langland lay on the slopes of Malvern Hill. And even now when the cider is growing warm in china mugs on the hob in the inner parlour, some bowman on his long journey home from Agincourt or some pikeman from Naseby would find there the same kindly company, the same broad speech, the same wise, tolerant native humour of that world in which he was born.

But I dare not linger in the alehouse ; this is a preface, and a preface is like the speech of a chairman introducing a speaker—it cannot be too brief.

How often we find the smithy just outside, and that is as it should be, for the smith's is thirsty work. I had many ambitions as a child ; one was to be a blacksmith. What more exciting than the roar

THE ENGLISH HERITAGE

of the blast, and even now I can still feel the thrill which stirred my small heart when I was allowed to work the big bellows. I remember riding down the lane to get my pony shod, and the very spot where I could first hear the ringing of the hammers. How exciting, too, the smell of the smithy ! The curious acrid smell of water thrown on the red-hot iron, the warm steam of the cart-horses, the burning hoof when the shoe was being fitted. And how I admired when the smith himself hit the shoe by accident against his palm and nothing happened but the sizzling noise of burnt horn and an exclamation of justifiable dissatisfaction at his own clumsy workmanship. How I longed to have a horny hand !

As these memories crowd back upon me I cannot help thinking of the happiness which these books will bring to countless readers, and I am permitted to envy those who are so fortunate as to write for this series no less than those who will read what they have written.

IV

SHAKESPEARE

SCOTT

BURNE-JONES

WILLIAM MORRIS

SHAKESPEARE

*A speech delivered at the
Opening of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre
at Stratford-on-Avon,
April 23, 1932*

SUCH a gathering as this, an international gathering, would be impossible to celebrate the fame of any statesman, of any soldier, of any priest ; and no money could buy it. It is only for a poet, and for poet of world repute, that such an assembly could be gathered together. It is not only to the head, but to the heart and to the soul, that the appeal is made that brings together people of innumerable nationalities. Men will die for ideals, but they will not die for facts. Shakespeare spoke into the inner chamber of men in every country of the world. But there is an innermost chamber to which the poet speaks and gains admittance, and that is the innermost chamber of his own countrymen ; and there is hardly a nation represented here which, while paying a tribute to our own Shakespeare, does not know the truth of what I speak : that there are some things a man can speak only in his own tongue, to that innermost chamber inaccessible to the foreigner.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Nothing is so untranslatable as poetry. Poetry was once defined—by Dryden, if I remember aright—as articulate music ; and music consists of an infinite gradation, not only of tones, but of semitones and demi-semitones, and the native ear is required to catch the infinite delicacy of the gradations, just as the native ear is born to catch the infinite delicacy of the sounds, and the sense of the meaning, and that magic that the greatest poets have. The words seem to come not from the brain of man, but are caught up from the seventh heaven and brought down to earth—the magic of the poet that speaks to the native ear.

Happy, indeed, was Shakespeare in his time. In a manner of speaking, the time was not unlike the present. It is true that in England the Renaissance was blooming afresh, and imagination had been freed as perhaps it has never been freed before or since. But there was a great change coming over the world, even as is coming to-day—a change from one era into another—and it requires some imagination on our part to throw our minds back into a period when England was a land of music and of song, and when the Bible—translated, by the infinite mercy of Providence, at a time when the English language was at its best and noblest and purest—was the reading of the common people of this country, and when their lives and conversations were coloured by it, just as to-day they are coloured by the penny press and the cinema.

SHAKESPEARE

And, in those beautiful words of Froude, " Now that age is to men like an unsubstantial pageant, faded. Between us and the old England there is a gulf of mystery which the prose of the historian will never adequately bridge. They cannot come to us, and our imagination can but feebly penetrate to them. Only among the aisles of the cathedral, only as we gaze upon their silent figures, sleeping on their tombs, some faint conceptions float before us of what these men were when they were alive." That is true as far as it goes. But the Englishman in Shakespeare remains ; and thank God there still remain in England corners of that land which he would recognise, and in which he would feel at home.

I like, in this part of England—and there is no more English part—to think of the contribution which the men of our blood, bone of our bone, have given to the country : of Langland, who came from the Cleobury Mortimer country ; of Dryden, who came from Northampton ; of Milton, who, although born in London, was of Oxford yeoman stock, and of the illiterate Englishman who wrote the best English of us all, John Bunyan, born at Elstow. Shakespeare was our typical Englishman. Some fools have asked : " Why did Shakespeare go to Stratford in his old age ? " He went back to Stratford because he was an Englishman, and every Englishman, like the homing pigeon, goes back to the place of his birth. He goes to London to make

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

money and succeed, but he always treasures in his heart the old home. He comes back—as thousands of Englishmen have done—back to the village where he was born, buys a larger house, and starts, as all good Englishmen do, to found a family. That is the simple explanation. Why did he leave his second-best bed to his wife? Because his daughter was his heir, and the one through whom he hoped the family would be founded. She was the head of the family. The man was rich enough to have a dower-house into which to put the widow; otherwise the widow went to live with the head of the family. The head of the family had the best bed and the widow had the second.

Shakespeare was not only an Englishman, but he was an English countryman, and that was implicit in every line of his plays. Those who have eyes to see and ears to hear will find, from the first page of his plays to the last, a most intimate acquaintance not only with everything that belonged to the country-side, but to all the sports, venery, falconry, archery, and everything one would expect a countryman to be familiar with. Never were four more pregnant words employed in relation to our Shakespeare than “Native wood-notes wild,” which sum up once and for all the greatest poet of our own country. And Shakespeare was a sensitive plate, as it were; every impression that could reach him from the England and the English among whom he lived was taken up and recorded at the lightning

SHAKESPEARE

speed that belonged to genius, and to genius alone, and which could never be accomplished by mere cleverness.

We English have our faults. They say that we are indifferent to the opinion of others. That does not arise from conceit, but from the fact that we have lived, until recently, in an island unapproachable except by the sea. We had no garden wall over which neighbours might lean and laugh at us if we had breakfast in our shirt-sleeves. We had become naturally indifferent to the opinion of those who dwell beyond the seas. Our pride, that pride which you will find running all through his plays, is not a pride arising from any sense of superiority, but it arises from a deep love—not peculiar to Englishmen—not only of our own land, but of that particular corner of the land in which we were born, and where we first grew up and received our impressions of life. It may be that we but poorly express ourselves. I was reading in a leader in *The Times* this morning that we want to express ourselves more, and let people know what we are and what we do. Well, there may be something in that.

I am rather glad to think that my days are drawing to a close before it is necessary to do that. It would be much better done by the younger generation. I find that a great Englishman and, as may be said in some circles to-day, a great Imperialist, expresses my feelings in words far better than I

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

can find. It was Sir Walter Raleigh who said, "Passions are likened best to floods and streams : the shallow murmur, but the deep are dumb." I think in some ways the Englishman—and to me it is a charm—is a man who never grows up, for he preserves into late life that intense reticence of masculine adolescence. The things that lie too deep for tears we seldom speak of, but let no one make the mistake of thinking that they are not there. Every Englishman keeps in his heart that corner of the country in which either he was bred, or in which, if he be unfortunate enough to be born in a town, his parents or his grandparents were bred. The idea of a new Jerusalem, with streets, makes no appeal to me. The words that come to my mind are rather, "He leadeth me beside the still waters. He maketh me to lie down in the green pastures." And that was very much the feeling of another great race, the Roman. To the superficial, Horace may have been typical of the city of Rome. That he was a patriot, that he loved Rome, none can deny ; but his heart was not in the Via Sacra ; it was not in the Forum ; it was in the Sabine farm, where the wood logs crackled on an autumn evening. That was why Shakespeare went back to Stratford. His heart was in the meadows by the river ; and to those meadows he returned, by those meadows he died, and in the sound of that running water he laid his bones.

I want to address a few words to our many

SHAKESPEARE

American friends who have come here to join in the Festival, and I say to them from my heart, "Welcome home." I say that because many friends over there who have helped with such loyal affection in the completion of this great memorial have done so because they feel that Shakespeare is theirs as he is ours, and they feel that because their ancestors were the countrymen of Shakespeare. To all Americans—and they are many—whose home was in this country before they crossed the sea, I say again a thousand times, "Welcome home," because that word "home" lived in America even after the Revolution. I expect it is dead now, but it lingered for a long time ; and on this one day we may use those words without any fear of misunderstanding. After all, what is it in England that the true English-Americans want to see ? They go to London, that constantly-changing London, where still they can find much of the past, and where the old names live. But the England they want to see is the country, and particularly that country village from which, if they have the record, their ancestors went forth to seek their fortune. It may well be that many Americans in many an English village feel strange subconscious stirrings of memory as they walk across the meadows where possibly their grandparents, five, six, seven, or eight generations ago, wandered ; when they see those churches before whose altars they plighted

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

their troth ; and when they hear those same bells that rang at their wedding and tolled at their funeral. We welcome them back, and we hope, when they return home to the New World, as we still call it here, they will take back with them tender and affectionate memories of this day in the old, old home-land. I would like here to echo the words of Sir Frank Benson. We have here represented a League of Nations of the States of Europe and of the World. I pray that this day, when we are met for so great a purpose, may be a red-letter day in their lives as it is in ours, and that they will go back strengthened to their work, to use every endeavour in their high position to bring about that better understanding, that better sympathy between the peoples of the world that can alone make for their happiness, and that can alone fulfil our greatness.

SCOTT

*An address delivered at the
Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club Dinner,
January 16, 1930*

I CANNOT imagine a greater compliment which you have in your power to pay to an Englishman than to invite him to become president of this club, and to address such a gathering in Walter Scott's own city. I accepted your invitation with alacrity and I am indeed proud to be here.

But when the hour is come that I should speak to you of Scott, my mind goes back to the bewilderment with which, as a small boy, I read the opening paragraph of *The Tale of Two Cities*—"It was the best of times : it was the worst of times ; it was the age of wisdom : it was the age of foolishness."

And so I might say of my task—it is the easiest of tasks ; it is the hardest of tasks. Easy, because whatever I shall say will come straight from the heart ; hard, because everything that can be said has been said before. There speaks to you no professor of literature ; you will hear no subtle criticism, no profound analysis ; but a plain, unadorned account of what Walter Scott has

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

meant to one of the millions of those who dwell in that part of Great Britain called England.

To us gathered here, Scott is not a mere name. There is not one of us in whose heart he is not cherished as a close friend. We cannot picture a world without Scott. There are those to whom this will sound an exaggeration. Let me recall the early days of that friendship. There is nothing singular about it. My experience was yours.

My father and mother had loved Scott from their earliest years ; on their wedding journey they visited Abbotsford as pilgrims. The first books in the library at home which swam into my ken were the author's edition of the novels, with the uniform editions of the poems and prose works. That edition was published, a volume at a time, on the first of the month, and a hundred years ago this last New Year's Day, appeared the second volume of *Rob Roy*. Before I could read them I used to pore over the little steel engraved frontispieces and vignettes, every one of which is stamped in my earliest memory. The picture of Di Vernon on her father's arm stirred my romantic heart, for she—I will confess it to you—was my first love : the vignettes of Dirk Hatteraick breaking Glossin's neck strengthened my faith in an ultimate justice that ruled the world. When I was nine or ten I was reading several of the novels aloud on the long autumn and winter afternoons to an indulgent aunt, and for months at a time we

SCOTT

lived in the worlds of which we were reading. *Marmion* and *The Lay* were devoured about the same time, and I would declaim either by heart or sometimes with a book in my hand, as I tramped the lanes or sat under a hedge to rest.

The world of the '45 and of the *Lay*, of *Rob Roy* and *Marmion*, of *Guy Mannering* and *The Pirate*, was that in which so much of my childhood lived and had its being. But I can remember now my consternation and amazement when I found after my first forty-eight hours at a private school that none of my coevals in my new environment had heard of Scott. Being one who liked going his own way with as little friction as possible, I dreamed my own dreams and kept my own counsel.

Such was Scott to me in my earliest days. A household word at home, the gateway which enticed my first steps into the world of poetry, history, and romance ; the man of whose life I knew so much from the lips of my parents before Lockhart and the Journals had become the companions of my pilgrimage. But I must beware of talking too much about myself : it is one of the temptations of age.

I think you have the poetry of Scott best described in the title of his first sustained effort in verse, the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*. He was the last great Minstrel and probably the last epic poet to write in our language. You remember Professor

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Blackie's observations on the distinctive character of epic poetry. It is the product of a primitive age before a written literature has come into existence, while the songs and ballads of the people are still preserved in memory and handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. It is founded on great national events and celebrates national heroes. The style is plain ; no daintiness either in things described or in the language employed ; no object too homely to be noticed, or too simple to be used for a simile. The poet lives in and is a part of the simple and homely life he describes.

Consider for a moment how the poetry of Scott fits into this scheme. He himself was born in Edinburgh and loved it, but his first consciousness of existence dated from Sandyknowe. To us who know our Lockhart that amazing country is spread before our eyes as soon as we hear the name of Sandyknowe, and those who know Scott know the indelible impression made on his early mind by these romantic localities :

“ Thus, while I ape the measure wild
Of tales that charmed me yet a child,
Rude though they be, still with the chime
Return the thoughts of early time,
And feelings rous'd in life's first day
Glow in the line and prompt the lay.”

Carried on the backs of the ewe-milkers among

SCOTT

the crags or astride on the shoulder of the cow-bailie, rolling in the grass among the sheep, drinking in the legends of the Border, through eye and ear came the very nourishment for which his whole being was made. You remember Tibby Hunter? "He was very gleg at the uptake and soon kenned every sheep and lamb by headmark as well as any of them."

But the picture that delights me most is that of the child having been forgotten one day among the knolls when a thunderstorm came on, and being found by his aunt lying on his back, clapping his hands at the lightning and crying out, "Bonnie, bonnie!" at every flash.

"Such cradles and such companionship, heaven gives its favourite children." So writes Ruskin, and he continues: "These I say then are to be your first lessons: the love and care of simplest living creatures, and the remembrance and honour of the dead with the workmanship for them of fair tombs of song."

A year at Bath, and back at Sandyknowe, for three more years. At Bath he had learned to read and soon catered for himself, supplementing the legends and ballads learnt from his grandmother, Barbara Haliburton. Scott tells us she "was meekness itself," this descendant of the Haliburtons who were reckoned by James V in Royal Proclamation to be "stoute men at arms and goode Borderers against England."

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

It is good to linger among these formative years, and I would we had time to follow the boy in his early manhood. But I have said enough to show you the inevitability of his early love, of his study of the minstrelsy of the Border, of his first essays in ballad writing, of the lay itself.

And when we consider again the canons laid down by Professor Blackie, may we not say that the hour had come and the man? To Wordsworth he was "the mighty minstrel," and there was understanding and generosity in Moore when he said: "How well calculated the way in which Scott had been brought up was to make a writer of poetry and romance, as it combined all that knowledge of rural life and rural legend which is to be gained by living among these peasants and joining in their sport with all the advantage which an aristocratic education gives. The want of this manly training shows itself in my poetry, which would perhaps have had a far more vigorous character if it had not been for the sort of boudoir education I had received."

I remember some words of Principal Shairp which I read with delight forty-six years ago at Harrow, and they appear to me as true to-day as when I first read them:

"Lastly, it may be said, the feelings to which Scott's poetry appeals, the ideals which it sets before the imagination, if not themselves the highest types of character, are those out of which

SCOTT

the highest characters are formed. Cardinal Newman has said, 'What is Christian high-mindedness, generous self-denial, contempt of wealth, endurance of suffering, and earnest striving after perfection but an improvement and transformation, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, of that natural character of mind which we call romantic? To have awakened and kept alive in an artificial and too money-loving age "that character of mind which we call romantic," which, by transformation, can become something so much beyond itself, is, even from the severest moral point of view, no mean merit.' To higher than this few poets can lay claim, but let the critics praise him or let them blame. It matters not. His reputation will not wane but will grow with time. Therefore, we do well to make much of Walter Scott. He is the only Homer who has been vouchsafed to Scotland—I might almost say to modern Europe. He came at the latest hour when it was possible for a great epic minstrel to be born. And the altered conditions of the world will not admit of another."

When we turn to the novels, we enter a land peopled by life-long friends. Our literature without the Waverley novels is unthinkable. Let us summon no less a spirit to our board than my Lord Byron: "My love to Sir Walter Scott. Tell him to write more novels; pray send out *Waverley* and *Guy Mannering*; it is five years

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

since I have had a copy and I have read the others forty times."

And a year later, to Scott himself: "To me these novels have so much of 'auld lang syne' (I was bred a canny Scot till ten years old) that I never moved without them, and when I moved from Ravenna to Pisa they were the only books I kept with me, although I had them already by heart."

In the years 1814-1818, a fourth of Lord Liverpool's term of office, or as long as from the beginning of the General Strike to this evening in 1930, there appeared *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *The Black Dwarf*, *Old Mortality*, *Rob Roy*, and *Heart of Midlothian*—an output in quality and quantity sufficient to have made their author immortal if he had never written another line. The next eleven years (as it might be, from the Treaty of Versailles to January, 1930) appeared the rest of the novels, excepting only *Count Robert* and *Castle Dangerous*, besides the *Life of Napoleon*, *Tales of a Grandfather*, except the History of France, and a mass of periodical criticisms.

What wonder the little critics seize on the speed of his work, and pick holes in obvious errors that would have been corrected in a second, third and fourth revision! I agree with Longinus when he said that lofty genius is far removed from flawlessness, for invariable accuracy incurs the risk of pettiness. His was a lofty genius, and creative power is the sign thereof.

SCOTT

“Chaucer, Shakespeare, Scott, Dickens—their other qualities apart—are grand creators, lords of literature all, by this specific virtue,” writes Quiller-Couch, “and were there sense in challenging, with this quadriga alone we could securely challenge any literature in any living tongue.”

And now let us look for a few minutes at the novels themselves. We all have our preference, and preferring one does not diminish our affection for another. If I had to choose a handful to be my companions in prison or on a desert island, I should unhesitatingly select the Scottish volumes. Give me *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *Old Mortality*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, and *Rob Roy*. I do not forget *Nigel* or *The Fair Maid of Perth* or *Waverley*; yet why not make my five into a round half dozen and throw in *Redgauntlet*?

Think for a moment how this glorious city of Edinburgh plays her part in my half-dozen. She lives in the Heart of Midlothian; the Grass-market, the Cowgate, the lofty houses and the narrow wynds, St. Leonard's Crag, and the Hunter's Bog—all are there. And well I remember how my heart jumped when my eye caught the name of Dumbiedykes Road one evening when I was returning from a ramble round Arthur's Seat. We have the start of the Queensferry coach when we heard the hour pealed from St. Giles's steeple and repeated by the Tron. We have been present with Colonel Mannering when he visited Pleydell;

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

we watched the birth of the South Side when Saunders Fairford moved from Luckenbooths to Brown Square. And though we do not find him in the novels, what generous heart is not thrilled by the name of the Crosscauseway for the sake of that very gallant gentleman, Green Breeks? Out of the darkness of near a century and a half ago he stands clearly before us, tall, blue-eyed, with long fair hair, illuminated for a space before the darkness closes upon him and for ever.

But Edinburgh and Border man as Scott was, the debt of the West is no less great to him than that of the East. Old Mortality is of Clydesdale, and among the immortals from that country are Bailie Nicol Jarvie, Cuddie Headrigg, and Andrew Fairservice. And how vividly the Glasgow of the '15 is brought before us in Francis Osbaldistone's Sunday in that city! When I sat, many years ago, on the Parliamentary Committee before which the case of the Glasgow boundary extensions was being considered, you may imagine with what a sense of almost inherited familiarity I heard witnesses called bearing the honoured title of Bailie, and riveted my gaze on the vast maps with which the walls were hung, to trace the spot where Francis and Rashleigh met, and the prison where Nicol Jarvie so unexpectedly encountered his fiery cousin from the Highlands.

Then the little pictures which stamped themselves on the retentive memory of boyhood—the

SCOTT

death of Kennedy, the gauger, and of Glossin—"as disagreeable a fellow as one often comes across," to quote Ruskin, who for once was indulging in a form of *meiosis*; Saunders Mucklebackit trying to mend his boat and Monkbarns comforting him, Edie Ochiltree and the Wardours caught by the tide, the death of Bothwell, the escape of Morton, old Ailie's telling of the death of Milnwood, Nanty Ewart and wandering Willie, Effie Deans and Meg Merrilies! What a gallery! We can only exclaim with the Dominie, "Prodigious."

And for every string of memory I have plucked there are a thousand more. Meg Merrilies! Read her speeches if you would hear Scott on the heights. "What wonder if the world sat up to listen!" wrote Verrall. And he points out with truth that Scott's true preparation for his life's work had been immeasurable. There is nothing finer in our language than the passage—every word of which you know by heart—beginning, "Ride your ways, ride your ways, Laird of Ellangowan, ride your ways, Godfrey Bertram!"

Guy Mannering was written in a few weeks, breakneck speed, but of Scott's best in this book Verrall justly says: "Years of training, now among books, now in the walks of men, have wrought the sensitive ear and brain to such consummate readiness, that, when the call came, the pen ran headlong without a trip, and, at the utmost

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

speed, put in strokes which challenge the microscope.”

It is curious to remember what was the inspiration of the Scottish novels. Scott, as is well known, was an admirer of Miss Edgeworth. He regarded her as the interpreter of Ireland, and as one who by her writings had helped to make more easy the passage of the Union. He thought he could do for Scotland what Miss Edgeworth had done for Ireland. Little could he have dreamed of what he was destined to accomplish. At one blow, as it were, he made Scotland realise herself, North and South, East and West, and he threw a glamour of romance over her, not only in England, but in every civilised country of the world. Who but Scott could have put George IV into a kilt? What magic was in the air in that prosaic year 1822 that made the King, the great-nephew of the Duke of Cumberland, propose a toast in Edinburgh “the Chieftains and Clans of Scotland”? To see how strange to Scotsmen themselves was this first reaction to the spells of the Great Magician, we have only to read Lockhart’s account of the Royal visit to Edinburgh; and what good reading it is! But Scotland herself could hardly yet realise the place which the Highlands and the Highlanders were to occupy in the imagination of the Sassenach and the foreigner. The tartan was to become her emblem, the piper her music. We have travelled far from the day when the effect of

SCOTT

Glengarry visiting a convent in the ancient Highland garb was to scatter the nuns, who fled in all directions. Yet it is interesting to remember that in the year after Scott had heard this story from Marshal Macdonald he attended a party in Paris, at the house of Princess Galitzin, where he saw “a whole convoy of Princesses of Russia arrayed in tartan ! ”

Mr. Gladstone, in one of his literal moods, once observed that Sir Walter had made Scotland. Ruskin asked him what he meant, and he mentioned the number of coaches that were now conveying happy trippers up and down the Trossachs. This was more than Ruskin could bear, and he broke out—“ But, my dear sir, that is not making, that is unmaking Scotland.” But though we may smile at each other across the Border, in so far as knowledge and understanding of Scotland exist across the Border, or even beyond the sea, we owe it to Scott, and to Scott alone.

And it is to bear witness to our undying respect and love for Scott the man, that we are once more gathered here to-night, to remember what our fathers have told us and to pass on the story to those that come after. How many must have stood as I have, outside the house in Castle Street gazing at the bow window, and lost to time, expecting to see the well-known figure, the “ stout, blunt carle,” the man of the hills with the keen blue eyes, rising from his chair and beckoning us

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

within? I see him forcing his way home from the Parliament House, buffeted by the January winds, now with Erskine, now with Clark; I see him with Pet Marjorie, the choice and beloved child of all time; a man if God ever made one—a man of genius, recognised and indisputable, but withal of character as wellnigh flawless as human character may be. And I call to witness Byron, whose friendship with Scott was based on true understanding and a generous admiration of each other's gifts. He wrote: "I have known Walter Scott long and well and in occasional situations which call forth real character, and I can assure you that it is worthy of admiration—that of all men he is the most open, the most honourable, the most amiable." A magnificent tribute from such a quarter.

There was a wonderful simplicity about him too: the simplicity that belongs to the man "the most open"; there was no attitudinising. "We are both good-humoured fellows," he said to Tom Moore, "who rather seek to enjoy what is going forward than to maintain our dignity as lions, and we have both seen the world too widely and too well not to condemn in our souls the imaginary consequence of literary people who walk with their noses in the air."

That puts in more literary form the "Damn it, Tom, don't be poetical," with which Byron extinguished Moore's rhapsodies when they were

SCOTT

standing on a balcony in Venice. "The block-heads talk of my being like Shakespeare—not fit to tie his brogues," was his characteristic reference to one kind of criticism to which he was subjected.

Ambition he had, and worldly ambition, but it was of no mean kind merely to pile up money for money's sake or to cut a figure in the fashionable world. The desire to found a family—Scott of Abbotsford—was a desire founded, as Lockhart said, on that ardent feeling for blood and kindred, a feeling which in its turn is founded on some of the deepest and truest instincts in the heart of man.

The industrial revolution was far from him; he was the soul of feudalism in its highest sense. His scheme of society was feudal alike in its simplicity and its nobility.

In the first years after the peace we find him making work for a score or more of additional labourers on his estate to incur, as he said "the expense of several years at once to serve mine honest neighbours who were likely to want work but for such exertion." He realised his duty to his own community, and fulfilled it.

How deep was that feeling of loyalty to those dependent upon him shows itself again when he first became aware of the imminence and magnitude of his financial troubles. No word of self—"This news will make sad hearts at Darnick and in the cottages at Abbotsford."

Harassed as he was in those last sad years, dying

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

to save his honour and his name, he would never step a hair's breadth from what he conceived to be the straight path of literary rectitude. I like to think of him when he was offered one thousand pounds to write a Life of Garrick. Lockhart had refused it on his behalf, and the offer was repeated : but it was *carte blanche* instead of the thousand pounds. " I will not budge," says Scott ; " my name would be only useful in the way of puff, for I really know nothing of the subject. So I will refuse : that's flat."

When you have lived with the " Life " and the " Journals," no impression of the man is more deeply impressed upon you than that " angelic sweetness of heart and temper," which his son-in-law remarked as his dominant characteristic. " His character seems to belong to some older and stronger period than ours." And never did it shine with more light and more strength than in those last years. It irradiated not only the clouds which gathered round him but the very souls of those who made his home. There is no more beautiful and touching picture than that of the Abbotsford household bracing itself to receive the buffets of the waves that were ultimately to overwhelm them. The butler, thrown from his high estate, doing half the work of the house, at probably half his former wages ; Old Peter, the coachman of a quarter of a century, turning his hand to the plough ; Laidlaw, whose occupation was gone,

SCOTT

coming over weekly from the Vale of Yarrow for a ramble and a talk with his old laird. And so with all of them—of whom said Lockhart “and all to my view seemed happier than they had ever done before.”

The one gift that Goethe said Heine lacked was that with which Scott was most richly endowed—the gift of Love. It was Love that bound the home at Abbotsford together, and the beauty of his character that attracted men unconsciously to him. You remember how, the year before he died, Mrs. Hughes tells us of the Billingsgate fish-monger who said to her, in as soft a tone as his loud voice could be lowered to, “They say he has been very ill, and is not well now—how is he?” Such a question is indicative of the appeal of Scott the man to the human heart.

I shall have failed to-night if I have not revealed clearly to you my own sense not only of Scott's greatness but of the rarity of the quality of that greatness. There is a story told of Ruskin by Grant Duff which exactly illustrates my point. Not one of us sitting here will fail to understand it. Ruskin was on a visit to Lord Reay at Laidlawstiel :

“You should have seen the reverent way in which he approached, with his hat off, an old man who had worked for Scott, and how he expressed his sense of the honour of seeing a man who had known Scott, and how the sense of his having

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

known Scott must make the man himself very happy. All this, said in a low and rich tone of Ruskin's beautiful voice, while he stood slightly bowed, made a memorable little picture, the man standing in his doorway and Ruskin just outside the cottage." It would be hard to imagine that scene were any other name to be substituted for that of Scott.

Nearly a century ago there were some words written by a strange Englishman which never fail to stir the heart of those whose earliest memories are of the fields and country-side :

" Life is sweet, brother. There's night and day, brother, both sweet things ; sun, moon and stars, brother, all sweet things ; there's likewise the wind on the heath."

To generation after generation of men, stumbling along in their quest of the ideal, distracted by the noise and confusion of the world and the perpetual strife of tongues, Scott comes like the wind on the heath, blowing away the mists and the miasmas, illuminating the path of honour and courage, of wisdom and sweet sanity.

" Through such souls alone
God, stooping, shows sufficient of His light
For us i' the dark to rise by."

BURNE-JONES

*An address delivered at the
Centenary Exhibition of Paintings and Drawings by Sir Edward
Burne-Jones, London,
June 16, 1933*

I WANT to tell you something of the personality of Burne-Jones and something of what his work stands for. It is extremely difficult to reconstruct a personality, and all those who knew him are now getting old. Before long we shall all have gone, and historians will have to reconstruct him with as great or as little success as they reconstructed the personality of the great men of the past.

I suppose one of the first things that must have struck anyone who met him was his singular charm. He had in a remarkable degree the charm which springs from natural grace and kindliness, and he had also what is still rarer, one of the liveliest and most beautiful wits of any man or woman that I have ever met. There must be in private houses in this country hundreds of his letters, unknown to this generation, which in time will find their way into collections and will be published. They will be placed by generations to come in

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

that small and supreme class of which Charles Lamb is one of the masters.

His generosity to other artists was remarkable. I think perhaps we might look for a moment at some of his friendships. The surest way of knowing what a man really is, and not the man as you read of him in newspapers, is to know who were his real and ultimate friends. Big men attract to them ; and just as they attract the best they repel the worst. It is not without significance that when he was a little over thirty Swinburne dedicated to him his volume of *Poems and Ballads*, a great tribute from a great poet to a young man. And if you remember that in some ways he was shy and never sought the big world, it is surely no coincidence that two of the greatest men of their generation were equally attracted to him and loved his company : Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Balfour. No man who was not in essence a great man could have claimed two such men as his friends.

But in these few minutes we must not dwell at undue length on the personality of Burne-Jones. We must consider certain aspects of his work. I do not know what authority Rossetti may have to-day, but I always think of the tribute Rossetti paid to him when he said, " If, as I hold, the noblest picture is a painted poem, then I say that

BURNE-JONES

in the whole history of art there has never been a painter more greatly gifted than Burne-Jones with the highest qualities of poetical invention."

I think everyone would admit, whether moved by his art or not, that he had one thing which to my mind is an essential concomitant of genius. That was the amazing fertility of creative invention that poured from him as fecund at the age of sixty-five, when he died, as it had done at the age of thirty, and which would have been pouring from him to-day if he had been living. As with the letters, so with those innumerable sketches of his. There again, in private hands all over the country, I have no doubt there are to-day sketch-books or fragments of sketch-books containing his inimitable drawings which in time will be the glory of some gallery or galleries, and in which future generations who love these things will take no less keen a pleasure or interest than literary people will take in his letters.

In my view, in the art of painting there are many mansions. I would never look at a man for what he is not. I would always look at a man for what he is. You have to look at Burne-Jones for what he is, and you can judge what he is by his work and by what he said of himself. There are two short quotations I should like to give you. One is a wise utterance by Lady Burne-Jones. Anyone who has

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

done any form of work, even such a form as political work, knows the eternal truth of these words : “ He had passed the pleasant wayside places where the labourer rests with his friends after a day’s work, and had begun the world-long day of those who seek no rest or reward but that of contenting the rigour of the Judge Invisible.” The other quotation is in his own words : “ I need nothing but my hands and my brain to fashion myself a world to live in that nothing can disturb. In my own land I am king of it.”

And that is what he was. He was true to his own inner light from the first day of his artistic life to the end. Gentle, and some may have thought, yielding ; but like iron and granite where the ideals he worked for were concerned. None of the idols of the market place had power to tempt him or to turn him from the straight path ; neither money, popularity, position, nor any of those false gods that have so often killed the soul of those whose promise has been greatest. It is not without significance that public recognition came to him, for the artist that he was, in France long before it came in England.

What was it that his art stood for ? I cannot speak the jargon—(I cannot even write a Treasury letter.) In my view what he did for us common people was to open, as no man had ever opened

BURNE-JONES

before, magic casements of a land of faery which he was exploring for us all his life. It always seems to me that poetry and painting, the great creative arts, are but manifestations of one great and eternal spirit, and I cannot help thinking that some observations which I read in a book of Gilbert Murray's contain the essentials of what I want to say. He tells us that Shelley derives all poetry and indeed all creation from love, and he goes on to say that Shelley's definition of love was a going out of our own nature and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action, or person, not our own. In other words, ecstasy.

You remember Shelley's definition of poetry : " Poetry and the principle of self are God and Mammon of the world." That is one of the most profound truths that were ever written, but it is a hard saying for this generation. You may express your personality with extreme skill and be popular in the market-place, and be called clever, or, if you are lucky, brilliant ; but you will never do anything great and you will never be anything after you are dead. The great thing is that you should stand dumb before a great work. No chatter about being clever or brilliant ; you stand dumb in reverence and awe before something that seems not of this world. There are two lines, well known perhaps,

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

but far less well known than the third line which everybody knows, which are applicable to what I am speaking about :

“ Ah, then, if mine had been the painter’s hand
To express what then I saw : and add the gleam,
The light that never was on sea or land,” . . .

and so on.

That gleam is what he brought into the world, a gleam of light “ that never was on sea or land.”

I will give you a last quotation in Burne-Jones’s own words : “ That was an awful thought of Ruskin’s, that artists paint God for the world. There’s a lump of greasy pigment at the end of Michelangelo’s hog-bristle brush, and by the time it has been laid on the stucco there is something there that all men with eyes recognise as divine. Think of what it means. It is the power of bringing God into the world—making God manifest. It is giving back her Child that was crucified to our Lady of the Sorrows.” The artist who could use those words could never, if he tried, paint anything ugly or mean.

In this age in which we live there is much that is ugly, much that is vulgar. Many of us, quietly and without talking about it, fashion for ourselves, in his words, “ a world to live in that nothing can disturb,” and it is in that world that we can cherish

BURNE-JONES

in peace the beauty which he has left us. In it is peace for our souls. Those who knew Burne-Jones, the few of us who knew him and loved him, will always keep him in our hearts, but his work will go on long after we have all passed away. It may give its message in one generation to a few ; it may give it in another generation to more ; but there it will be for ever, for those who seek in their generation for beauty and for all those who can recognise and reverence a great man and a great artist.

WILLIAM MORRIS

*A speech delivered at the
William Morris Centenary Exhibition, London,
February 9th, 1934*

I AM all in favour of centenaries. It is good for us to praise famous men and to call a halt for one second from the eternal crabbing that is so characteristic of much work that is done at the present day. But it is good in the further sense that the centenary of a famous man is the last occasion on which there can be present those who knew him in the flesh. It cannot be without interest that the older of us, before we leave this scene for ever, should be able to testify to the younger something of what in our view those men were, what they stood for, and what we conceive to be the lasting influence that they have left as their heritage.

The eyes of childhood are very different from those of maturity. I was quite unconscious of having an uncle in Burne-Jones who was anything essentially different from other people's uncles. I knew that he painted, and that he enjoyed it. In the same way, Morris was to me in those years a perfectly natural phenomenon, and exactly what you would expect your uncle's friend to be. I do

WILLIAM MORRIS

not remember the time when I did not know him and of him, because he was the friend of my mother. She was an exceedingly pretty and precocious child, and when she was nine or ten she was a great pet of Morris, Burne-Jones and Rossetti ; and, extraordinary as it seems, they used to allow this child to sit in their studio, talked to her, and, what was still more odd, allowed her to talk to them.

I have one or two delightful tributes of those doings, one a drawing given to her on her eleventh birthday, " With the affectionate regard of Rossetti " written in the corner ; and another a most beautiful bit of illuminated manuscript worked on vellum, which I always understood was Morris's first attempt—and infinitely better than most men's last—given to her as long ago as 1857, during which year she had her twelfth birthday.

Nothing seemed more natural than that a friend of my mother should write volumes of poetry by the time he was thirty, nothing seemed odd that the same man should make wall-paper, that he should do illuminated manuscripts, and that he should begin where other people left off.

All these things seemed perfectly natural, just as it was natural for my mother to ask him, when he paid his first visit to Iceland, to bring me back an Icelandic pony. He tried to find it for me, but came to the conclusion that it would cost so much to ship that I must be content with a Welsh one.

In those years (a mighty long time ago it was) he

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

seemed part of that life in London which I saw when I came up from the country. I lived in the country and came to London but little, and from those years of early boyhood I saw nothing of him. I went to work, and then, when I was twenty-seven or twenty-eight, I had the great pleasure of seeing him once again.

I say "pleasure," but that was only half that I felt, because, as it turned out, it was near the end. It must have been in the spring or summer—I keep no diary—of 1896, when I was at Rottingdean, and Morris came to spend a night or two with my aunt. Even my unskilled eye could see that he was ill. That well-known blue reefer jacket was hanging loosely on a shrunken frame, and he was obviously very, very tired. But I have a vivid recollection of the happiest, most affectionate, and the gentlest talk throughout the afternoon and evening; and the next day we travelled together as far as Paddington. No one could have been more delightful to the raw young man than he was on that occasion. He seemed to take me, after a lapse of years, as the child of the child he had loved so many years before. We parted warmly and affectionately at Paddington, and the last vision of him in my recollection is seeing his back bent over Smith's bookstall, while he waited for a slow train that went to Oxford. Those are early, happy and sacred recollections.

The first point I would concentrate on is the

WILLIAM MORRIS

volume and variety of Morris's work. He was a story-teller from boyhood, a story-writer and a poet from the dawn of manhood ; and yet, while poetry poured from him, I do not think he really regarded the making of poems as work, but thought it was not worth doing unless he was doing something else at the same time. He was painting, drawing, modelling, designing, illuminating and decorating, making furniture and stained glass, tapestry, rugs, carpets and wall-paper. All those things he was doing in full blast by the time he was thirty years of age. When we study his work the first and foremost conclusion we come to is that he was essentially not only a great craftsman but, from the variety of his work and the very skill of it, probably the greatest craftsman of all time. He loved craftsmanship because he could not keep his fingers still. He loved it for the joy of it.

What strikes me if I try to project an elder mind into what one unconsciously saw as a child, is the supreme absence of any form of self-conscious pose or humbug in a man who was a very great artist, and a profound hatred of every form of cant and humbug—of what to-day would be called a snobbish form of highbrowism. He was a man who went through life on a perfectly even keel, swaying not to the right nor to the left, but just living for his work and for every kind of work. There is one saying of his of which I am very fond. He used it probably in connection with artists, but it is equally

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

true in every walk of life. "If a man is not thinking about himself he is himself." It takes a minute to let that sink in, but it is quite true.

Morris had that essential quality of genius, fertility, the creative power that never stopped. He did not pick out from technical schools, or put through examinations, the boys or men whom he chose to work with him. He just went out into the highways and ditches, seized some lad by the seat of his breeches, dumped him down in front of a loom, and the man became an artist. Contact with genius did that.

What I liked about him so much was that he never used the jargon of art. He used English and English that could be understood of the common people—of whom I am chief. Another phrase of his of which I am very fond was: "One's head is rather like an everlasting onion. You peel off the idea you see and there is another underneath it, and so on." That exactly describes the process, and it is eternal until you get down to that little white essence of the onion.

He took great joy in all the common things of life. Beer. Tobacco. He thanked God for having made anything as strong as an onion. He liked just the ordinary simple fun of life. I can hear his laughter now in those far-off days; he was fond of practical jokes, of horseplay; and all mixed up with his work. A great, glorious, jolly human being.

WILLIAM MORRIS

If we ask ourselves what may be seen in this world of ours as the result of his life, we may fairly say that there are many more to-day than there were sixty or seventy years ago who seek and desire what is beautiful and what is clean ; that there are many people, too, who feel discontent with what is mean and what is ugly and vulgar ; and in so far as that heaven works it will hasten the day when the beautiful will thrive. That widely diffuse feeling, due to many causes, has yet been due largely to the inspiration of his life and his work, a life lived for beautiful, clean, honest work in which there was nothing mean in any sense of the word.

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TO A HIGHLAND AUDIENCE

TO A WELSH AUDIENCE

TO A CANADIAN AUDIENCE

TO AN AMERICAN AUDIENCE

TO A HIGHLAND AUDIENCE

*A speech delivered on
Receiving the Freedom of the Burgh of Inverness,
June 13, 1930*

BARELY three years ago I stopped at a small town in New Brunswick in Canada, which was carved out of Nova Scotia, which was carved out of Acadie. I was present as the British Prime Minister at a gathering of Acadians one hundred and seventy years after the Acadians had been turned out of their homes by a British Government—one of the most romantic moments of my life. They had gathered, as they do every five years, from every corner of the great American continent—from east and west, north and south, some from Louisiana and some still speaking the French tongue.

To-day I find myself as one of the children of the dispersion ; whose mother's people lost their home but a few years before those Acadians, by having been out in the '45, chased from their homes by the British Government. And so it is

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

that to-day—Englishman as one is—those curious, subconscious, ancestral feelings come up and link one to a past that has gone, and gone for ever. One thinks to-day of those children of the dispersion, who left their homes after the '45 and through the rest of the century and through the nineteenth century. Of those who went from the Highlands, hardly any have appeared in the ranks of great financiers. But wherever there has been hard work to be done, in exploration, in opening up new country in the United States, in Canada, in New Zealand, in India, in the army (in all ranks) with fighting to be done—there was the Highlander in the forefront, and has been ever since the Empire began.

The Provost spoke of the empty valleys ; that is the dispersion. But what of the future ? The same problem faces us with a difference in England, but it has been the problem of many civilisations. How are you going to keep the people on their native soil ? The newer culture, the newer civilisation—if that be the right word for it—always tends to drive out the old ; and it is hard to say how these virtues which we associate with the soil, both in the Highlands and in my England, may remain under the terrific pressure of the industrial system of Great Britain, under that pull of the towns with the crowds, football matches,

TO A HIGHLAND AUDIENCE

the movies and all the paraphernalia of what we call by the name of civilisation.

But whether our people remain or whether they be dispersed, they will always take with them the genius of their race that lives and that mingles so effectively with the different blood of the South. It is, indeed, essential to the progress of our people in the South. Whatever the faults of the Celt (and, being half a Celt myself, I know them as I know the faults of the English, and very useful I have found it), we are here to look at our virtues and consider what our contribution has been. Surely, wherever we go, we bring from the Highlands a love of beauty : of the beauty of nature, of the beauty of language, of the beauty of poetry, of the poetry of life, and of the music of life. And we bring, too, a love of education and learning, not only for what it may bring to us in a material way, but for its own sake ; one of the most precious lessons that mankind can learn.

That is what the Saxon lacks more than anything, a loyalty to the past—not always an historic past, but very often a past that lives and grows and has its being in the very essence of our selves. That very loyalty helps us, I think, in our work in the present,—that very loyalty to the past with its dream of beauty and with its real hardness

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

and hardships. These things save us from what is the greatest peril of our age, the peril of materialism. The Celt, I say again, has his faults, but you cannot graft materialism on to the Celt. If you do, you make a very terrible compound. The struggle against materialism in the hearts of our people is one of the greatest struggles of this age, and in that struggle those of us that draw some even of our blood from the Highlands have no doubt on which side to take our stand.

I remember very well a New Zealand Highlander farmer asking an uncle of mine how long the Highlands remained in the blood of a New Zealander after he had left his native country. The reply was, "The porridge, the heather, and the Psalms of David last to the third generation." I am convinced that the sense of beauty, the determination not to be crushed by materialism, the sense of loyalty to the past, does not last to the third generation ; it lasts for ever. That link we have to-day. English though I be, fully Highland though my brothers in this ceremony may be, Highland as most of you are to-day—yet that, surely, in our best moments, we all have in common. To-day's ceremony is a token that the work of Clan Donald in this world is not finished yet, and though their work may not lie wholly in the Highlands in the future, wherever the members of that great Clan may be found they

TO A HIGHLAND AUDIENCE

will be sensible of their kinship, and true to their loyalties and the deepest convictions of their glorious race.

TO A WELSH AUDIENCE

*A speech delivered at the
National Eisteddfod at Treorchy,
August 8, 1928*

YOU have paid me the greatest compliment that you could pay to an Englishman in asking me to preside to-day at your Eisteddfod at Treorchy, in company with two of the most distinguished living Welshmen : Mr. David Lloyd George, the greatest living orator in the British Isles, and Mr. J. H. Thomas, who in resourcefulness, adroitness and pertinacity represents the best qualities of the race from which he has sprung.

I want, first of all, to pay tribute to the courage and the faith of the men and women of these valleys who, in these times of distress that might well quell the heart of man, have organised and carried through this great festival of Wales in their midst. And they have only succeeded because of the strength of Welsh tradition and the affection with which this festival is bound to the heart of every Welshman—a festival that keeps alive the language, the legend, the literature, the poetry, and the music of your country.

The Eisteddfod, like many old institutions, is

TO A WELSH AUDIENCE

aristocratic in origin. There were days when the bards sang at the courts of the Welsh princes, when they guarded themselves—or should I say, safeguarded themselves—from the competition of their inferiors, and banded themselves into that great community, with the Gorsedd ruling over it as the Cabinet.

I sometimes wish that Mr. Lloyd George, when he was Archdruid in Downing Street, had bequeathed the exceedingly magnificent garments of the bards for my colleagues, and I wish he had bequeathed to me the sword, which I might have unsheathed three times and cried aloud to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and to the Home Secretary, “A oes Heddwch?”

But the Eisteddfod has come from the courts of the princes to the hearts and homes of the people. The strength of literary tradition in the people of Wales is a marvel to all foreigners. Often I have talked of democracy. Political democracy is but a means to an end. The true democracy after which we all strive is an enjoyment in which there may be made common the enjoyment of wealth in its highest sense of well-being, of culture, and of leisure. That is the ideal to which we are moving all too slowly; but if there be a right cause of discontent in the hearts of men, it is not that one man envies another because he has more motor-cars, but because of that feeling, ineradicable in the heart of man, that there is

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

something unfair in there being but a partial allocation of the discoveries of the human mind and the genius of the human soul in the arts—and that the achievements of the human spirit should be shared, and shared by all alike.

Poetry and music are, thank God, the common heritage of your people. Keep the standards high and keep your grip on the soul of democracy, for without a soul even democracy will make men as the beasts of the field that perish.

The culture of the things that you cultivate is like the air. The possession of that culture robs no man, but it enriches everyone who partakes of it, and if I might say one word—before I go back to my Saxon home looking out on to the Welsh hills—to this great gathering of Welshmen, I would say, “Hir oes i’r iaith Cymraeg.”

TO A CANADIAN AUDIENCE

*A speech delivered at a
Luncheon of the Canadian Club of Ottawa during the Ottawa
Conference,
August 15, 1932*

I HAVE always maintained that one of the greatest difficulties of the present day arises from the fact that the statesmen of the world have but little time in which to think, owing to their work and to the demands which public life makes upon them. I am sure you all know, in your own degree, in your various vocations, how your days are consumed in an infinity of detail in an ever-changing world ; and there is a real temptation to be subdued by that detail and to lose your sense of proportion, perspective and direction. At times it is overwhelming. But to succumb is to lose your own soul. As a statesman I often feel, beyond and beneath that ever-flowing stream of letters, interviews, deputations, committees, speeches and dispatch-boxes, a still small voice that challenges all my efforts, searches out my motives, questions the meaning of everything that I do, and forces me to stand, as it were, in the full glare of the white light of eternity. And it

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

is necessary for us that we should withdraw ourselves, if it be only for five minutes and ten minutes, that we may heed that voice and that we may think.

Sometimes, on these wonderful Canadian evenings, I have looked out at that most beautiful view from my window in the Château Laurier and watched the after-glow over the Laurentian Hills, and the still waters of the Ottawa, and I seem to see passing along towards the hills, to the sunset, the eternal procession of mankind, emerging from the dimness and the darkness of the earliest ages, struggling, raising themselves, falling—empires and kingdoms rising and falling—and I see the procession come to my own time, when I step down and take a humble place in it, and march on with the multitude, little knowing whence we came, or whither we are going. Yet you all know that with the aid of stone and brass and parchment we are able to some extent to reconstruct a picture of bygone ages and all the successive civilisations that have ruled the world. They rose to wealth and power and splendour, and are now blotted out by the sands of the desert and lie beneath the confines of old cities, where they are trodden on by the modern generation.

You may say that these are curious thoughts for our Empire, and for this great Dominion, in the plenitude of our strength and with a future of unlimited hope before us. Yes, but I call your

TO A CANADIAN AUDIENCE

attention to them that we may nerve ourselves with renewed effort to see that so far as lies in us we attempt the impossible, and that is to build up our Empire for perpetuity.

We are met here in Ottawa as members of a great family. Whether it be that we are children of the blood, or children by adoption, we are members of the same family in this, that we owe one common allegiance to one King and to one Empire. But we are more than a family. The British Empire is the material and intellectual embodiment of a civilisation which a few years ago was tottering on its foundations, and which together we helped to save for mankind. We stand, in the order of the centuries, as the heirs of the Roman Empire. I shall not pause this afternoon to draw familiar comparisons between two great historic organisations. I introduce that likeness merely to remind you of some words that were uttered by a Christian orator sixteen hundred years ago—a citizen of that great Empire. Now, he said, he saw mankind living as citizens of one city and members of a common household, men come from distant lands across the seas to one common forum, “and the peoples are united by commerce and culture and intermarriage. From the intermingling of peoples a single race is born. The Roman peace has prepared the road for the coming of Christ.”

Those words were written sixteen hundred

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

years ago by Prudentius, and I quote them only to show you what was thought of that empire in that far distant age, and because of what they can teach us here in Ottawa in the twentieth century. They make one thing plain, that progress is not permanent, nor continuous, nor inevitable. The achievement of that great Roman Empire was largely the result of her political genius ; but political genius did not prevent the downfall of the powerful empire of the Cæsars. And a similar challenge is being made to-day to our genius and our industry and our loyalty. The world stands on the precipice of bankruptcy while in possession of the secret of plenty. And we ? Are we—I believe we are—so imbued with the value of the British Commonwealth to the welfare of the world as a whole that no toil will be too great, no strain too severe, no patience too protracted for the discharge of the task which lies before us ?

I am convinced, and you all are, that our economic relations with one another and with the world call aloud for examination and for action. I believe that the more efficiently we can conduct our business, our own business among ourselves, the better for the world outside, for by so conducting it we can help the world. But I am clear that a policy of Imperial isolation, which is not in the mind of any delegation to-day, even if it were possible, is not desirable from the standpoint either of the peace or of the prosperity of the world.

TO A CANADIAN AUDIENCE

International trade ought to be a great civilising instrument ; and in concentrating our minds as we are now, and as we shall do as a result of this Conference through the coming years, on the improvement of Imperial trade, we shall contribute, I believe, to the forces making for human betterment.

There need be nothing mean or sordid in such an occupation. The Empire itself is the product of mixed motives, ambitions and aspirations, and is all the more human for that. I remember Parkman tells us somewhere in one of his histories that Canada began with a mission and a trading station. Surely you have all human life in that—our duty to God, and our duty to work for our daily bread. The thing that matters is that we should bring minds neither mean nor sordid to the discharge of our Imperial responsibilities. Let us remember, if we are dealing, for instance, with the trade in pepper and salt, that pepper and salt are very good condiments, but they are not necessarily the good life itself. The Empire may have grown through a desire to develop trade, and the wished-for wider markets may have brought about territorial expansion in the past, but in the last and ultimate analysis the Empire was not built up on trade agreements, nor can it be maintained solely by tariffs and preferences. It can only be maintained permanently by a clear conviction of its ultimate goal. Its ultimate goal

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

is the spiritual unity of the whole British Empire. The ultimate goal is the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. We build for eternity. And it is because the Empire, the Commonwealth of Nations (some like to call it one, and some like to call it the other), is an achieved example of a League of Nations that it is vital to maintain it in the midst of the welter of uncertainty and rivalry which surrounds it in the world.

Now, that is true of the Empire. But in my view each part of the Commonwealth of Nations, whether it be the Mother Country or whether it be a self-governing Dominion, must be true to itself to preserve its own soul, to have pride in its own history, in its own achievements, and build up its own prosperity, its literature, its art, its education and its spiritual life. It must be true also to the larger Commonwealth of which it is part. This, I know, may become increasingly difficult. It may entail sacrifice at times when the national consciousness develops—and there has been an immense development of national consciousness in most of the countries of the world since the War. Dominion status indeed implies freedom, but I think it should also imply co-operation. I believe that failure to realise the wider heritage that grows out of Imperial connections entails a betrayal of a very profound spiritual trust. And Dominion status must, in the third place, imply loyalty to civilisation as a whole.

TO A CANADIAN AUDIENCE

The physical shrinkage of the world has so far brought no corresponding unity. Those last words do not cover that sloppy internationalism that, I believe, does nothing but harm in the world. The particular genius of each race is needed in the world. Every nation is called upon to make its own contribution, not only economically, not only politically, but to the spiritual foundations of that better world of which we all dream in our better moments, and which we are eager to bring about.

I think that now, if I may, I should like, as an Englishman who loves Canada and has many friends in Canada, to make a few observations about Canada, as you allowed me to do when I made so many speeches here five years ago.

Oddly enough, in Mr. Speaker's room which I have the honour of inhabiting at present in Parliament Buildings, I picked out a book the other evening and read a couple of lines written in Mrs. Humphry Ward's journal of her impression of a journey right across Canada from sea to sea, taken in 1908: "So, in a swallow's flight from sea to sea, I saw the marvellous land wherein, perhaps, in a far, hidden future, lies the destiny of our race." That is a pregnant sentence. And one asks oneself, belonging to an old country, what preparation Canada is making for that day, what ideals she is keeping before herself; for by ideals alone a nation lives.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

The points I should like to say a word or two upon are these, because I believe that they are the foundations of a civilisation that is worthy to endure : the religious life of a community, on which it would be an impertinence for me to offer any observations ; respect for law and order, and the sanctity of the judiciary ; the maintenance of the standards of education ; and the building up of a tradition of public service.

You will notice I have said nothing there about getting rich quickly. I have purposely avoided that, because you will hear of that, *ad nauseam*, from almost every speaker who addresses you on what makes for the prosperity of a nation. I want, if I may, to confine myself to other aspects of life.

Now I do think that in Canada you have inviolate and undisturbed and unbroken that traditional respect for law and order which the Canadians brought from the mother countries of France and Great Britain when they first came over. I hope you will always cling to that, for without that no civilisation, whatever else it may possess, can ultimately endure. And I rejoice to think of the position in Canada of that great profession from which the judiciary is chosen, and the manner in which the Canadian courts fulfil their functions. The sanctity of the judiciary is a branch of law and order, part of it, dependent on it, necessary to it. Those three things go

TO A CANADIAN AUDIENCE

together. I would say to you, preserve them as you have them, and cling to them, and never let your ideals go down.

And now, with regard to education, if I may say so without presumption, I do not think anything is more important in a young country than the maintenance of the standards of education ; and again I rejoice to think that in your great universities here you are maintaining standards. The maintenance of those standards, again, is essential to a civilised and cultivated state. It is not a question of intellectual snobbery at all. It is a question of people knowing the difference between first-class and inferior work—it is a question of recognising quality when you see it. To relieve anyone who may think that that savours of snobbery, let me put it in more familiar language ; it enables a people to recognise whether an achievement is a real achievement or is only humbug.

I should like, while speaking of universities, to pay a tribute, if I may, as an Englishman, to the great work that has been done by Sir Robert Falconer, who is just retiring after a quarter of a century's guidance of the great University of Toronto.

I should like also to say how I rejoice that English boys are now beginning to come to the Canadian universities from the English public schools. The more that we can have of Canadians and British going to each other's universities, the

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

better I think it is for the subsequent relationship of the two countries and for the influences that may be brought to bear between them.

There are just one or two other aspects on which I would touch, which I have watched with intense interest, which fill me with delight and show me that, at any rate to-day, Canada is going along the road on which I, from over three thousand miles of water, should like to cheer her on her progress. With regard to her hospitals, her welfare work, her great work—which she originated—in connection with Women's Institutes, I do not think there is much that any country can teach her. And I hope I am not trespassing on any matter of domestic politics when I say with what great pleasure I have learned that, whatever Parliament in Canada in its wisdom may decide to do with the radio service, that radio service here is not going to be left in private and irresponsible hands. I believe that to be a vital matter. We have solved that problem, I believe, satisfactorily at home. I have no doubt that you will be equally successful.

And now I want to say a word or two on parliamentary government. There is a saying of President Wilson of the United States which I think contains a great truth. He says: "Democracy is wrongly conceived when treated merely as a body of doctrine or simply a form of government. It is a stage of development.

TO A CANADIAN AUDIENCE

It is built up by slow habit. The English alone have approached popular institutions through habit. All other nations have rushed prematurely into them ; through mere impatience with habit they have adopted democracy instead of cultivating it."

It is because the system of parliamentary government and the democracy that lies behind it are so peculiarly an institution of that soil from which so many of us are sprung that I should like to say a word or two about it. You have had a comparatively long history of parliamentary government ; and it has not been easy. But your institutions have been built up on a firm basis. You have your difficulties, as we all have, but they are yours. It would be impertinent of me to comment on them. I know perfectly well that you will, in the fullness of time, overcome them. But I should like at this point, as one who has had some experience of what the work of a Prime Minister means, to say a word to you about Prime Ministers. Looking from afar, as I do, at Canada, I do realise the weight of the burden that must lie for many years to come on the shoulders of a Prime Minister of Canada. And I think that Canada is to be congratulated on the calibre and the fibre of the men who have held that great office since 1867, the year of the Confederation. The Prime Minister of Canada is the one man who must view Canada as Canada. He must view

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

it nationally, as one great nation, and you all know as well as I what that means, and the difficulty of it. Yet it is by his success in viewing Canada as one great country, three thousand miles across, and in helping to unify it in thought and in action, that ultimately he will be judged as a great Canadian statesman or not. It is a super-human task, and I think that he is entitled, whatever his political views may be, and whatever the colour of his Cabinet, to have the sympathy and the support of all Canadians who love their country.

And now I would say a word on a subject upon which I spoke to you five years ago, and in which I am deeply interested. Much of my endeavour at home has been to bring young men into Parliament and to see them train themselves for the multifarious duties that fall upon statesmen in these days. I believe that in any country the element of those who sincerely and patriotically are prepared to devote their lives to public work and to turn their back on the hundred and one tempting avenues that are open before young men, to take up that difficult, that trying work of public life—I believe that element is invaluable. I know well what the difficulties are in a young country. But there again, I think, perhaps we older people can help. We can help by encouraging them to come into public life. We can help them by trying to get them into Parliament. We can

TO A CANADIAN AUDIENCE

help them by making room for them in good time. That tradition of making room is a very English one, for, you remember, it was an English Prince of Wales who tried on his father's crown long before he died. And I think that desire of youth to wear the crown, while sometimes we may find it a little trying, is yet not a bad thing ; for it is not a bad thing for youth to have those aspirations and it certainly cannot be said not to be salutary for us old men.

Again speaking of Parliament, you have a tradition. And you may well have a tradition, because, after all, in Canada you draw deep from two great civilisations in Europe, from two countries that have produced great literature, great orators, great administrators. It is in the blood of Canada, and the great parliamentary tradition should be a heritage that should be yours, and can be yours, and, I have no doubt, will be yours. I believe that Canada has kept before herself a clear vision of all the things that really matter in a nation's life.

Out of the Conference may come not only material benefits, but a great advance in our thought, an appeal to the youth of the Commonwealth to lend a hand to make that Commonwealth what it ought to be, a metaphorical throwing off of our coats and roughening of our hands. The Conference will not set back but will set forward our recognition of each other's needs and of the

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

spiritual unity of that great Commonwealth and of the world and help us to realise, if we do not already realise, that, in Professor Edington's words, "our life on earth is an opportunity to work at, to participate in the work of creation."

TO AN AMERICAN AUDIENCE

*A speech delivered at the
Thanksgiving Day Dinner of the American Society in
London,
November 29, 1928*

It is a particularly delightful act of friendship on your part to ask an Englishman to be present to-night at your most domestic family gathering and to allow him to return thanks for the toast of the evening.

The Ambassador said quite truly that you have much to be thankful for. He spoke of the Pilgrim Fathers. I like to think of that little colony that went out before them and spent the winter at the mouth of the Kennebec River in the early years of James I, and came back home and said : " This climate is one in which no Englishman can ever live." It shows the tenacity of the race that after them the Pilgrim Fathers went and did live.

It is a wonderful thing that about that time Hudson went sailing up the river to which he lent his name, and got as far as Albany in the sure and certain hope that he would emerge on the shores of the Pacific and find the route to India. It

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

is a curious fact to remember, too, that just about the same time as the Pilgrim Fathers went out, King James—who, I may remark for the benefit of those who have forgotten, was a Scot and not an Englishman—thought there was gold in Virginia, and sent a colony out to find gold; and to his indignation they only found tobacco.

But when you look at those beginnings, it is marvellous, following on through the next two centuries, to see the fortune that attended those men, their children, and those who came out to join them. They were nearly all British stock; and their ancestors, in common with other people in Europe, had had to fight for every yard of land they ultimately lived on in whatever country of Europe their far-away ancestors had first settled. On the American continent the descendants of those men had a clean start. The same spirit that had driven them out from England drove successively the most eager stock of each generation, till, in time, they had bridged the rivers, they had forced their way through the forests, they had struggled over the plains, and they had crossed the mountains till they did what Hudson had dreamed of, and looked down on the Pacific.

They had no real rivals. The French, occupied in wars in Europe, paid but little attention to the Louisiana settlement, which fell easily into the hands of the Americans. There was no Great

TO AN AMERICAN AUDIENCE

Power holding the western gateway. There was nothing to stop them, and they found themselves, by the grace of God, in possession of a continent, rich in many parts for agriculture, full of easy means of communication by great rivers; and beyond all that were three thousand miles of ocean on either side that protected the nation in its childhood and its youth.

The ocean protected them from more than hostile arms. It protected them from immigration at a time when it was all-important for the nation that they should take possession of the whole land and stamp upon it the characteristics of the people from whom they sprang. That was done before immigration began to roll in. And mark this: as immigrants rolled in and as the Pacific coast became settled, the engineer came into his own and the railroad was thrown across the continent. By that means alone you prevented the possibility of a separate American nation growing up beyond the Rocky Mountains, just as the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway kept British Columbia indissolubly linked with Canada instead of becoming a Pacific nation.

You may well have your Thanksgiving Day, and I rejoice with you here to-day. But, of course, there are some things in which I feel my own peculiar thanksgiving. Let me remind you of this: had there been no America, there would have been no tobacco. I have read some very

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

fine and true words—the author of which shall remain anonymous—to the effect that the true history of tobacco would be the history of liberty in England and America. It was tobacco that planted the English nation in America. It was the London company that sent the settlers out, that recognised their government in Virginia, the free-est government of that time on that coast. Virginia was founded on tobacco, and Virginia produced Madison, Jefferson, John Marshall and Washington, who were all reared on tobacco. I may add that Virginia—Heaven bless it!—is the only country in the world which has had tobacco as its currency. There was a time when you could buy a coffin in Virginia for 100 lb. of tobacco. In 1619, before the Pilgrim Fathers, the London Company sent out a shipload of marriageable women to Virginia. So deeply was liberty implanted in the minds of the English at that time that those women had perfectly free choice as to whom they should marry. The bridegrooms, however, had to pay in tobacco for the transport of their brides.

There is another thing, I always feel, for which we have cause for thanksgiving, and that is for the knowledge of America that comes to us in your books. America, from early days, has been more familiar with our literature than our people are, on the whole, with hers. But I should like to say a word or two about this point, for I have always

TO AN AMERICAN AUDIENCE

cherished, among the books I have loved, many American books of all periods. I know few more delightful books than Franklin's autobiography. I remember so well a passage at the beginning. He there describes the effect that George Whitefield's evangelistic preaching had on two Quakers of his acquaintance who went to hear him. The great preacher touched their hearts, and through their hearts their pockets. And one who had brought nothing whispered to his friend a request to lend him something to put in the plate. To this the other Quaker replied, "Friend, at any other time I would lend to thee gladly, but not now, for thou seemest not to be in thy right mind." May I suggest to the Ambassador that any request from America for loans to build armaments should receive that answer?

I think Washington Irving has preserved for us English one of the most delightful books on the old English Christmas. I am always grateful to him for that. It was Melville who first among writers opened to us in words of genius the treasures of the Pacific, Hawthorne who first brought us in close touch with the early days of the Puritans in New England, Poe who first taught us to write detective stories. All honour to him; I live on them now! An American woman, the successor of Poe, Anna K. Green, gave us *The Leavenworth Case*, which I still think one of the best detective stories ever written. At the age of fourteen, I

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

revelled up and down the Mississippi with Mark Twain, one of the real interpreters of America to England. About that time Bret Harte brought us to the romance of the "Forty-Nine" and the early years of the Far West. Those times seem remote indeed to-day.

I want to pay tribute to-night also to the modern school of American writers and the great work they are doing for our common literature. I think the whole world is becoming the richer for the work of the modern American school. I do not believe that two better war books ever were written than Mary Johnston's two novels on the Civil War in America. Then there are the authors of *Babbitt*, *John Brown's Body*, *The Show Boat*, and *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*. People often talk about American literature as though so much of it is an echo of English. In all these younger writers, we are getting a more distinctive note, which is more peculiarly American, something that augurs well as the forerunner of a new and great literature, peculiarly your own. I do rejoice in that, because I think the influence of great literature on both sides of the Atlantic, if we read wisely, may be a far better means of interpreting one to the other than can be accomplished by either politicians or the Press.

One serious word in conclusion. We have, both English and Americans, throughout history very much to be thankful for. I think

TO AN AMERICAN AUDIENCE

to-night, amidst all our thanksgiving, there is no better thought which we can take away with us than those words known as well on your side of the ocean as on ours :

“ Lord God of Hosts be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget.”

VI

A TOAST TO AN ARCHBISHOP

A TOAST TO A YOUNG MAN

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A TOAST TO AN ARCHBISHOP

A speech proposing the toast of "Randall Davidson"
at the Harrow Association Dinner,
July 12, 1928

THE toast I have to propose is "Randall Davidson : our Archbishop." In a few days it will be sixty-one years since he walked down Harrow Hill for the last time as a schoolboy going out into the wider world beyond, and almost at that moment, in a remote corner of Worcestershire—up on the Shropshire border—there was born a male child. Generations elapsed before that schoolboy had heard of the male child. Many years, though not so many, elapsed before the male child had heard of our chief guest. To-night we meet as we have often met before. I have to tell you so far as I am able why I think we should drink his health, and he has to return thanks. Two more difficult tasks were never imposed upon two friends.

I do not know whether it has struck you—it often has me—that there is no period of history of which we are so ignorant, or to the knowledge of

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

which we come so late, as that of the decade immediately preceding our arrival on this earth. And so it is that I have only lately realised the world into which Randall Davidson stepped at that time. It was a Harrow controlled by a beardless Dr. Butler, then under thirty years of age. It had, as masters, men whose fame went out all over the country. There was his own housemaster, Westcott, who became Bishop of Durham. There was Bosworth Smith and there was Bowen. There was Bradby. There were Drury, Steel and John Smith, and there was Farrar, who went to Marlborough. Amongst those who were at school with him also were men who in time became Governors of the School and scholars such as Walter Leaf and our friend Dunedin, whose name—Graham Murray—is simply splashed all over the prize-boards of Harrow—so much so that there was no room for my name when I was there ! Then there were George Hamilton and Francis Maitland Balfour who, if he had lived, would have been one of the greatest scientists of the century. There was Gerald Randall, and, one who came just at the end of the Archbishop's career, Charles Gore.

When Randall Davidson was just in the Sixth Form at Harrow there were words spoken four

A TOAST TO AN ARCHBISHOP

thousand miles away which ran round the world—words which you will recognise immediately I quote them :

“ With malice toward none, with charity for all ; with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right let us strive on to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves.”

Those words might have been written by an Archbishop for an Archbishop. I should like in a few minutes to say a little to you about certain aspects of the Archbishop's life and my own which perhaps are concealed from the general public. There is a painful similarity between many of our duties. We are known as the cockshies of the public ; I in one ring and the Archbishop in the other.

Which is the better I can hardly judge, but I know there are in this country some thousands of men and women who, whenever they have a lucid interval and have nothing to do, sit down to write a letter to the Prime Minister—and I believe that much of the Archbishop's time is taken up in dealing with similar correspondence. The letters come to me from castle and hall, manor house, suburban villa and cottage, and from the County Lunatic Asylum. The other day I got a letter from a blind man. In it he told me that he had

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

lost his wife and had found that it was impossible in his condition to exist without a woman to look after him. So he hunted about and found one. He was a gas-fitter, and said he knew all about houses. The assumption is that one of his friends had recommended him the wife and that he took her on the recommendation. I am sorry to say that the marriage was not a success. They had separated ; or rather he wanted that they should separate. But he found that he could not, and he wrote to me asking if I could study the marriage laws very carefully to see if there was no protection afforded by the Legislature to a blind man who had committed an error of judgment in marriage owing to his physical condition.

There is another—perhaps more serious—aspect. The Prime Minister—(I am not going to say that his task is lonely, because once when I used that phrase it was not understood)—but the Prime Minister in his daily task does become the recipient of an extraordinary number of confidences of all kinds from all over the world, and he does see human nature as bare as a pole. It may be that the Archbishop shares that privilege with me. I remember once in my early days as Prime Minister complaining, which I rarely do, about some treatment I received to Mr. Asquith, and asking him if he did not think it was rather dirty.

A TOAST TO AN ARCHBISHOP

He replied, looking at me with a melancholy face and his eyes wide open, "I have long since ceased to be either shocked or surprised at anything that can happen in this world." I remember, too, and this is illuminating, an observation that was made by a young man in the smoke-room of the House of Commons. The young man observed to a friend of mine that he thought it had been one of the most unpopular things I had ever done to send Edward Wood to India. "Edward Wood," he said, "is one of the few men to whom I could say, 'Oh, damn that fellow so and so,' of a person in a high position in the Government."

I feel certain that sometimes there may be something said or done by a colleague of the Archbishop which perhaps does not fill him at the moment with confidence. He cannot possibly reply in the terms of my friend in the smoking-room of the House of Commons. No doubt if Mrs. Davidson would speak to-night she would say that she has heard before now the word "Tut-Tut," or "What a goose that dear fellow the Bishop of Barchester has made of himself."

I think in one way the Archbishop is more to be pitied than I. The Archbishop is supposed to be at the head of a body of men who seek peace and ensue it. True it is that the tiger spirit is

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

deeply embedded in human nature. I have often noticed that pacifists are most fearsome fighters on political matters. I have seldom seen such doughty blows dealt, or heard such observations made, as in the recent struggle about the Prayer Book. The amount of polemical literature which was used would have done credit to any political party with two centuries of pamphleteering behind it.

The reason I have mentioned these things is that I have known four or five years of that side of life which the Archbishop has had now for a quarter of a century. The marvel is that he has preserved his sanity and kept himself unspotted from the world. On the part of you all I should like to say that what we admire him for and what we love him for is the combination which we believe exists in him—a combination of deep piety and true wisdom, sympathy and loving understanding both of the needs and of the minds of the people. We admire him for his realisation of the breadth of the Church and his determination that so far as lay in his power during his Primacy there should be nothing in the way of heresy hunting. He has kept the peace amongst all kinds of people. His motto has always been “By slow prudence to make mild a rugged people, and through soft decrees subdue them to the

A TOAST TO AN ARCHBISHOP

useful and the good.” It needs much more courage to check persecution than to join in the fray. We honour him to-night as an Englishman for the character that we are proud to think was first moulded on the Hill at Harrow.

A TOAST TO A YOUNG MAN

*A speech proposing the toast of "Viscount Furneaux"
at his coming-of-age, Gray's Inn, London,
December 7, 1928*

It has been said that I am but a Socialist masquerading as a leader of the Tory Party. And yet, even if that be so, I am a stickler for precedents, and I object strongly when dining in Gray's Inn to have to break the hallowed silence of this hall by speech. That feeling is shared by my noble friend opposite me, Lord Furneaux.

But I have been accustomed in recent years never to be allowed to enjoy a dinner without singing for it. I have to sing for it to-night, but a pleasanter kind of song than usually falls to my lot, for I have to sing the praises of the guest of the evening in proposing his toast, the eldest son of our old friend "F. E."

This, Lord Birkenhead, is a gathering of workers. We are all workers here, and we have not all of us had time to follow the career of Lord Furneaux. I have made it my duty to dive into the past, and to search the records of the present, and lay before you the results of my researches.

A TOAST TO A YOUNG MAN

He was educated at a school the name of which at the moment escapes me [cries of "Shame!"], but I am told that, following his father's career as closely as he might, when his father became Keeper of the King's Conscience, he became Keeper of the Field.

It must have been a hard task for him to excel at the game of football, a game in which those gracious concessions which are made by his family so readily to their opponents are often overcome. Despite his hereditary tendencies, he triumphed at that, as he did at fives; and I am told also—and here again the hereditary influence comes in—that, suffering as he did from the exiguous pittance which was allowed him at his school in his early days by his parents, he took to journalism, and, as I understand, became at an early age the editor of the *Eton College Chronicle*. The remuneration of that post is one of the secrets most strictly kept. He also wore lightly the great honours of the Presidency of Pop, a mysterious institution; but, if I may judge by presidents who have been friends of mine in the old days, that is a post to which no man may aspire unless he enjoys more than a conventional share of popularity.

I am told, also, that he has taken with some avidity at times to the study of the humanities. His researches in mathematics have been less prolific and less successful. Here again, I think,

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

judging from some intimate conversations that his father and I have had, there is a bond of sympathy between the older and the younger generation which they will always cherish.

I always think that for those who have been brought up in the damp and dank atmosphere of the Thames Valley, a change to some more bracing country is often desirable ; but he elected, or his father elected, that he should proceed and continue his education in a similar climate at Oxford. That career is not yet finished, and I understand that he is already making friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, and that he is found to play squash with his tutor, and fives with the senior proctor.

I am also told that he belongs to a club of some repute in the older University, called the Bullingdon Club. Now that conveys but little to me, having been educated at another place. I remember well, though, when I go back to the early years of Queen Victoria's reign, that there were two clubs at Cambridge, one of which was composed mainly of Blues—and Blues were never given in those days except to cricket, football, athletics and the Eight—and to the other belonged what the newspapers would call "the gilded youth." The name of the one was the "Hawks," and the other was the "Athenæum." I remember well it being said in Cambridge at one time, that to mark a great

A TOAST TO A YOUNG MAN

event a letter had been written by the only member of the Hawks who could write to the only member of the Athenæum who could read. But that was forty years ago, and since then there has been the spread of popular education.

The alliance between father and son has been continued even into the present day. It seems only the other day that there was some controversial correspondence in the Press. I cannot remember whether it was Lord Furneaux or Lord Birkenhead who started it, but they were both at it at the same time, and Lord Furneaux flung into the columns of the *Morning Post*, a paper which I think has always had a partiality for his family, some observations on the Wall Game which, I believe, led to an equally decisive reply.

But in one respect, I fancy, the son—if I do the father no wrong—has gone a step farther, or, shall I say, in another direction. I remember the father showing me, with great and ill-concealed pride, a poem which the son had written in the *Empire Review*, and I remember that at that time—and I had not the pleasure then of his acquaintance—I hoped very much he might continue in that path because I believed he might do good work in it.

Now, sir, I have not much more to say, but I think it would be of interest to this company

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

to know that, after the exiguity of the pittance of early days, the parental heart has relented, and, in honour of this occasion which we celebrate, the son has been presented with a motor-car. And what will interest this company much more is that so far the motor-car survives and those who have travelled in it still live to tell the tale.

I have told you these things because I think, and you will agree with me, that so far the son has done well ; and I can tell him that if he lives to be a hundred he will never be as great a man as when he was Keeper of the Field : whether he becomes Lord Chancellor, Archbishop of Canterbury, or Prime Minister, those moments will never recur. For myself—I have now had perhaps more than my share of those so-called good things—I never felt a tithe of the pleasure or excitement when I was offered one of them as that I felt when I got my first colours at the age of about fifteen.

Lord Birkenhead, the record which stands to-day is a good one. We are gathered here to-night out of friendship to you and to express to you and your son our high hopes for the future. I can only wish that all that he dreams of in his most private and secret moments, all that you dreamed of for yourself when, as a younger man, you looked into the fire on a winter's night at Wadham, all that you now dream of for him—I pray that those things will come true and that he will look back

A TOAST TO A YOUNG MAN

on to-night, as the years roll by, as a night never to be forgotten, when this great gathering of his father's friends met to launch him out on the great sea of life.

THE B.O.P.

*A speech delivered at the fiftieth anniversary of
"The Boy's Own Paper,"
January 18, 1929*

THIS is a unique occasion. There is no one who has a more profound regard for the great British Press than I, yet it seems to me difficult to imagine that even for the jubilee of the *Daily Mail* such a gathering should be drawn together by the affection to the paper and to its editors as brings us all together to celebrate the jubilee of *The Boy's Own Paper*. When the day comes for that later jubilee, will there be such testimonials from the great ones of the earth as we have to-day ! Even Eton, that looks with such kindly tolerance on all that lies outside its immediate ambit, writes in the person of its head master that he has a very vague but kindly recollection of *The Boy's Own Paper* !

Westminster and Harrow, in the sterner spirit of the coming democracy, say that their recollection is vivid and their gratitude is vivid, too ; and the Headmaster of Harrow pays his tribute to Talbot Baines Reed. We have the Leader of the Labour Party using a phrase I rejoice in. He says :

THE B.O.P.

“ Many a gorgeous hour of happiness came to me from *The Boy's Own Paper*.” There are few papers to which one could without exaggeration apply that expression. Last, but not least, I see my colleagues in serried rows acknowledging the debt they owe to it in their youth. The Home Secretary, in the days of childhood, little thought, when he made rabbit hutches and fowl pens and kept pets, that he was going to have his own hutches on Dartmoor and at Wormwood Scrubs, and that he was going to keep his pets in Borstal.

It is a great occasion, and it must be an occasion of reminiscence, because those of us who remember *The Boy's Own Paper* from its inception are now getting among the elders ; and to us it is difficult to describe the pleasure that we felt on seeing the cover of the paper when we came into the room. Every figure tells its story, and little did I think when I first used to look at it “ with avidity ” (if I may quote the powerful expression of the Headmaster of Westminster) how applicable it would be to my later years. I see myself all over that cover. I see myself in the middle, at the top of a greasy pole—a precarious position. I see myself on the right, angling—what for ? and, on the left, taking a plunge into the waters—of dissolution ! A little lower down on the right, I am taking a fence I shall get over, but the stile does not make for speed. On the left, I am hurling objurgations, at the bottom I skate over thin ice, and in the

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

middle again I am pulling, I trust, my weight in a boat. The left-hand bottom picture is more a picture of mystery than any of the others ; it looks like snowballing. Those of us who have been brought up on *The Boy's Own Paper* fill our snowballs with neither stones nor glass.

We cannot meet to-day without saying a word of those to whom we owed so much. I shall say nothing about your great editor—that is for another speaker—but we cannot forget Talbot Baines Reed and his stories. We cannot forget Kingston, Jules Verne, Ballantyne, and Dr. Gordon Stables. I would say a word of congratulation to Mr. Gordon on the work he did, and congratulate him on being able to write under a number of aliases. (I often wish I could speak under an alias ; I would make speeches that would move the country.) Of the present-day writers I forbear to make special mention ; I confine myself to those of the past, and I think perhaps with peculiar affection of some of those who were great names to us boys, but only wrote occasionally on their own subjects. Among them I remember Captain Webb, Mr. Maskelyne, Mr. Edward Whymper ; and last, but not least in any way, Dr. W. G. Grace. Webb I remember with peculiar sympathy, because he came from near my own county and learned to swim in the Severn. Maskelyne I always remember because

THE B.O.P.

after I had given up all hope in the earliest days of excelling as a circus rider, I thought I might make a conjurer. Whympers I remember from his account of the first ascent of the Matterhorn, which was the first Alpine story I ever read.

But Grace ! No one of this generation can ever realise what W. G. Grace was to the boys of the 'seventies and early 'eighties. Stories about Grace are legion, and they have passed into legend. There is a short one I often remember because it contains, as the short sayings of great men so often do, a profound truth adaptable to every circumstance in life. There was a discussion one night after a match in which the greatest bowler of the day had been engaged and had done deadly work, and no one had been able to play him that day except Grace. They were talking over the way this peculiarly deadly ball ought to be played, and having seen that Grace had played it without fail, they asked him how it was done. Grace looked at them and said : " You put the bat against the ball." After all, it is as good a way of playing in politics as in any other field.

But the wonder of *The Boy's Own Paper* is not that it delighted us when we were young, not that it provided such wonderful fare for us, but that it has gone on all these years carrying out that great work, and is carrying it out to-day. I am ashamed

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

to think of the gaps in my knowledge between those early days and to-day. I am afraid that I am of newspapers (as the Headmaster of Westminster would say) *parcus deorum cultur et infrequens*. But I rejoice to find that *The Boy's Own Paper* is going strong to-day, and I have read with great interest almost every word of the number that was sent to me to show what it was doing.

I missed the old cover. Yet I liked the phrase that occurs here : “ *The Boy's Own Paper*, for boys of all ages.” I like that because I always think one of the great charms of my sex is that the best of us remain boys to the end. How often you see two old gentlemen, perhaps lame and crippled with gout (as I shall be soon) leaving their club late at night, one saying to the other, “ Come along, old boy ! ” Have you ever heard two old ladies going home and saying one to another, “ Come along, old girl ” ? We men have our faults. But the secret of eternal boyhood is in us, in our failings, and possibly sometimes in our manners and in our customs.

There is one other thing that made me feel that, though the years go by, nothing really alters. That is the advertisements. The advertisements in the current number might all have appeared *mutatis mutandis* in 1879. The majority of them deal with stamps. It has been said by one great man in an

THE B.O.P.

autobiographical work that when he was a child he knew the exchange value of every marble in his native village. I knew the exchange value of every stamp in 1879. But there is something better, deeper, and beyond stamps. It is unmistakable and could only have appeared in *The Boy's Own Paper*. I rejoice to find that in this age of progress the advertisement is here to-day: "Stink bombs. Just drop one. 3d." And, most mysterious of all—without any illustrations as to its effect—"Itching powder, 3d." That shows, I think, that the boys who are nurtured on *The Boy's Own Paper* will turn out men and neither prudes nor prigs.

The eternal boy remains the same. *The Boy's Own Paper*, while giving him fodder of all kinds, has succeeded with infinite skill in avoiding Scylla and Charybdis. It has not turned him into a prig or a prude. It has given him intellectual interests without turning him into an intellectual. Perhaps best of all, it keeps up to-day, as it did at its inception, that spirit of adventure which is the most essential part of the normal and healthy boy, and without which the man sinks into a player for safety or one who looks after his own average. We do not want either of those in the big world that lies beyond the school.

So, when I put to you "Prosperity to *The Boy's Own Paper*," as the principal toast of this great

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

gathering, I ask you to drink it with acclamation—the older ones of us with happy memories and great gratitude, the younger ones in full enjoyment of the paper as it exists to-day, and all of us with full and fresh hope for the future.

SAILORS

*A speech delivered to The Company of
Master Mariners, London,
March 21, 1928*

THERE is one great difference between me and all of you to-night which I would explain before I begin. To you a ship is the only place in the world where you ever do a day's work. To me it is the only place in the world where I get a day's rest. And in memory of happy voyages with my friend Sir Bertram Hayes I am proud to be here to-night and to congratulate you upon your new Master. There is no public service which His Royal Highness touches that he does not adorn. And who more suited to be Master of such a Company than the heir to the British Throne? It was a far-distant ancestor of his, King Alfred, who first realised that this country could never live without a Navy. And, if I may refer to his Welsh ancestors, none did more for the Royal Navy than the Tudors—Henry VII, Henry VIII, and the *Great Harry*, whose name was as famous in her time as the *Queen Elizabeth* is to-day. I think sometimes we English are a little apt to forget how much we owe to the seamanship of

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Wales. I notice to-night that while we have seven "Smiths" on our list of members we have eight "Joneses." I can only say this to the historians among you: if you eliminate Welsh names from the list of the great pirates of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there would be no history of piracy worth reading.

His Majesty—I was going to say, has been a sailor—he *is* a sailor, God bless him! And the Prince of Wales will not misunderstand me when I say I congratulate him on being Master of your company. I venture to say that amongst all the great posts and positions that have fallen to him, and may yet fall to him, there will be none that will give him more pride and satisfaction than to be identified in this close manner, for however short or long a time it may be, with the merchant fleets and the fishing fleets of this country.

It is a great privilege to propose the toast of "The Company of Master Mariners." The very name stirs the blood and braces the will. We in this country are founded in the sea, and we always have been. Only the other day a Roman ship was dug up in what are now the foundations of the L.C.C. Hall. Generation after generation throughout the centuries came here, settled here, in ships. We were seamen first—Angles, Saxons, Norsemen,

SAILORS

Danes, and Normans. And all this time the sons of this country and the descendants of these men have ploughed the seas of all the world, have carried with them their language and their ideas, have embraced the ideals and language of foreign countries, have absorbed what they have seen and have taught their fellow-countrymen. The merchant and fishing fleets have been the nurseries of our fighting men. Sea sense is woven into our national life. The building, the manning, and the sailing of ships are what we have been known by and what we have lived by.

Many of you in this room, perhaps most of you, have been trained in the hard school of the old sailing ship. No training in the same degree has ever called forth higher personal qualities in alertness, resource and endurance, and with all that a pride of seacraft, a pride that makes the very ships themselves come to life. No one described that better than a man who was a sailor himself—Conrad—and I often think (when I compare in commonplace analogy the word statesmanship with the word seamanship) how Conrad said : “ The art of handling a ship is a finer thing than the art of handling men.” And I know what he meant. A statesman can be a humbug ; a skipper cannot. Human character is wrought as it were upon an anvil in that ceaseless struggle with such

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

great powers as the sea and the wind ; and generations of seamen have left to their country that priceless legacy of unflinching courage and endurance.

There is much I might say to you to-night about that courage and endurance in the War. There is only one brief story I should like to tell you, and which has never been published yet. It is about a trawler that was working in the North Sea Patrol, and, hearing gunfire, went to investigate. It sighted two light cruisers, and, being a British trawler, it attacked. The cruisers paid a tribute to our men by firing two broadsides, and left the trawler to sink. The only man unhurt was the skipper. His mate—I only know his name was Charlie—was still alive, pinned under a twelve-pounder. The skipper raised the gun, using tackle in the rigging, and carried Charlie and placed him in the skiff. The lashings were cut just before the trawler sank, and the rest of the crew were dead or dying. The boat was picked up, and Charlie was put in the hospital ship. He was sent to Chatham for an operation, and spent six months on his back. He was invalided out from Chatham hospital with a disability pension. He went straight home to Fleetwood, and was met at the station by his wife. Before he left the station—there was a north-west

SAILORS

gale blowing—he heard the life-boat called by gunfire. He was a member of the crew before the War. He pushed his kitbag into his wife's hands, took his usual place, and helped to rescue a schooner's crew before he went home to supper. Let us never forget Mrs. Charlie. As the kitbag was pushed into her hands, in her husband's words, "she said nowt." I don't know Charlie's other name ; I don't know if he is living ; but if he is, and if he is listening to-night, I should like to tell him that every man here takes his hat off to him.

Talking about sailing ships, I have always been a great lover of the English tongue, and I had hoped that among the activities of your Company you might be able to take steps to see that the picturesque language of the old sailor may not pass from the land. After all, you must remember that layer after layer of our nation's history is embedded in the language of our seamen, much more than we sometimes think or realise. Mr. Pearsall Smith, who wrote an entrancing essay on this entrancing subject, used this very beautiful phrase : " Words are like sea shells. They have their voices, and are full of old echoes." The Angles and Saxons, before they came to this country, used to anchor their ships by letting down pieces of rope and trailing these on the bottom.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

The Roman sailors taught them the use of the anchor, and taught them the word "anchor," and that word "anchor," which came to this country by way of the Angles and Saxons, has lasted to this day.

There were also the words "keel," "reef," "stern," and "wake of a ship." The last was a phrase that was used for the track left through the ice when the viking ships went from Norway to Greenland. Sailors brought from the Mediterranean Byzantine Greeks the word "pilot," which took the place of the old English word "lodesman." From Italy came "brigantine"; from the Dutch, "skipper," "lugger" and "smack"; from the Spaniards, "cargo" and "binnacle"; and when our Elizabethan ancestors went to fight the Spaniards on the Spanish Main, they came back with "hurricane" and "hammock." Strangest of all, far away in Malay, was the word "launch," which the Portuguese took, and Spanish sailors took from the Portuguese, and the English sailors took from the Spanish. Then, almost in our own lifetime, descendants of our own name have sent across to this country the familiar words "schooner" and "clipper."

Now you know why it is that I want the sailors' words and words connected with sailing ships kept in our language, even though the sailing

SAILORS

ship may be passing away. Our sailors have exported our terms into nearly every language on earth. And I myself, who have always an immense faith in the plain and simple people of my country, wish indeed that the care of the English language might be left to the sailors to look after. Even in the last generation we have got the good English words "steamer," "battleship," "ironclad," "dreadnought"—words that hit you like a hammer. Other people are floundering about and inventing words like "cinematograph" and "hydro-aeroplane." There is poetry, too, in the names of ships. Take, for example, *Cloak of the Wind*, or Drake's little *Golden Hind*, or, in our own time, the *Cutty Sark*.

Now one word about what I know you all expected when you cheered my allusion to the sailor's language. Joseph Conrad says that the worried gale-weary seaman, in moments of exasperation, is disposed to extend certain phrases to all ships that were ever launched. Such addresses as sailors make at these moments may, perhaps, theologically be deemed profanity. But philologically, they are of exceeding great interest. And I cannot but think that if you made and preserved such a collection for private use among members of this company and their guests, it would remain the most valued book in your library.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Though ships change with the centuries, the men who go down to the sea remain. It has been said that the ocean has no compassion, no faith, no law, no memorial. It bears no trace on its surface of the comings and goings of men. But the unnumbered generations who have sailed upon it, who have loved glory, or gain, or adventure, or service, are undiminished and are lasting.

GEOLOGISTS

*A speech delivered at the
Opening of the Geological Laboratories of Liverpool
University,
October 21, 1929*

It is one of the curious features of English public life that if one is engaged in politics one is considered qualified to express an opinion on every subject on earth. Some of us recognise our fallibility, and others do not. I am in the former category. I am the more shy this afternoon, in being present at what constitutes the opening and concentration of a comparatively new branch of study, by seeing in the gallery a number of those who will profit by that extension of learning. I cannot imagine a more unpopular function for a public man to have to fulfil than to have to add one more subject in either honours or in pass degree to those already in existence.

My duty is to say a few words to encourage the study of geology. I may begin by giving you my own first experience of geology. As a child I lived in Worcestershire, and the earth there is red sandstone. I was told, I know not with what truth, that it was the new red sandstone; and I, of

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

course, thought there was nothing on earth to compare with it. One day I met someone from Devonshire, and he told me that he too lived on red sandstone, but his, instead of being the new, was the old. That hurt my pride more than I can tell you. I felt I was but a *nouveau riche*, or, as we should say to-day, a profiteer, living on new red sandstone when there were people in the south of England living on the old. I learned enough geology as I got older to realise that there was sufficient respectability of ancestry whether you lived on the old or the new.

To the rising generation I would say : I myself am extremely fond of a literature, not unpopular in the present day, which treats of the adventures of detectives. It seems to me that if there is a science which does detective work—I speak as an amateur—it is the science of geology. It is the greatest detective service in science. You who pursue those channels of literature which I do with such profit and delight, know perfectly well that Sherlock Holmes and all his friends and successors arm themselves with powder for the purpose of getting finger-prints, with cameras, tape measures, and sometimes ultimately with revolvers. If you go in for geology, you will be able to bring to your aid a telescope, a spectroscope, and a microscope, and in place of the revolver a hammer. But how superior are your adventures to those of Sherlock Holmes ! A shower of rain washes away

GEOLOGISTS

the traces of the foot-prints for Holmes, the touch of another hand destroys the finger-prints. The wearing of a glove even may put people off the scent until the criminal has escaped to wherever criminals go.

Not so in geology. If a detective is in search of evidence to hang the criminal, you are in search of evidence too—evidence of the evolution of the planet on which you live. Your evidence may be harder to find, but it is harder to destroy. So far from the shower of rain obliterating the traces of those prints which you seek, you are able to discover the marks of the drops of rain which fell hundreds of millions of years ago. And not only that; you can deduce from that the direction of the wind which fell when that storm planted itself indelibly upon our earth. You can trace the foot-prints of birds at an equal distance of time, when birds did not think it necessary to wear gloves or socks to disguise their foot-prints. You can trace the results of the sun on the mud-flats in the primeval ages, you can trace the career of the worm who roamed through this earth æons and æons before your forbears were ready to impale him on a pin to catch a perch.

A field of romance is open before the geologists; a romance which, like truth, is always stranger than fiction. It is little wonder that the Workers' Educational Association has recently asked for classes in geology to be added to those they already

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

enjoy. It may well be that when you come to study a science which takes you through the evolution of some thousand of millions of years, it may lessen a not unnatural impatience of anyone who may be unable to accomplish in six weeks what may take a year or two to do.

Geology finds itself linked, as so many sciences do, in close alliance with another science—biology. I have no doubt that according to whether you are primarily a geologist or a biologist, you will lay stress on the work that *your* branch does. But there were some words of Professor Lapworth which interest me, as an outsider: “Without the results arrived at by the geologists and the proofs of the uninterrupted geological evolution of the past lands and waters of the globe, these great biological conceptions might well have originated as intellectual theories, but they would for ever have remained figments of the imagination, reasonable it may be in themselves, but wholly incapable of proof.”

If that is a reasonable claim, it is a tremendous claim to make, and it at once places geology in the forefront of the sciences which are teaching and leading mankind.

I well remember discussing with a philosopher some years ago the Einstein theory. He said, “Mathematicians talk about the Einstein theory, but it is perfectly impossible for any man who is not a philosopher to begin to understand it.”

GEOLOGISTS

Now, I, knowing nothing about it, treasured these words in my heart, until I met one of the foremost mathematicians in this country. I tried it on him. "Einstein," I murmured. "Yes," he said, "philosophers talk a great deal about Einstein, but no man who is not a pure mathematician can begin to understand Einstein."

In England, very properly, we always want to know what is the practical use of anything. And it may well be that, among people like myself, the popularity of such a thing as a superoxillatory curve or the root of minus one may have suffered from the fact that we find it hard to realise what their practical use is. If you ask that question in geology the answer is very simple. A great deal of our knowledge of this earth and its contents has hardly reached the empirical stage. Geology is of the greatest assistance to man in everything that is connected with the comfort and health of his life upon the surface of the globe. In coal mining, in the discovery of oil, in finding beds of clay, of building stone—all those matters that have to do with human comfort in the habitation—geology is the servant who can help and teach us, who can enable us most economically to get at the forces of nature which we want to use for our own comfort and health.

More than that, geology is moving forward now in a practical direction, where, I think, you will have great fun. I give you another quotation,

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

which I seized upon because of the pleasure it gave me : “ The day is fast approaching when, taught by nature’s methods, the students of this branch of geology may learn to imitate and manufacture in their laboratories even the natural jewels, which are the most valuable of all the mineral products known to mankind.”

That opens up a glorious field, not only of making millionaires, but—what is much more amusing—of unmaking them. Having told men where they can find diamonds, and encouraging them to make millions out of them, you then make their properties of no value by imitating them. The problem that arises in my mind is this : when you are able to make precious stones, in any quantity, which no one can tell from the originals, what is to be the future criterion for those who buy their jewels ? Is it to be the intrinsic beauty of the stones, or what they cost ? In other words, will diamonds at a shilling a dozen be worn by everybody in this country ? It is a very interesting problem to compare the real intrinsic value of a thing, valued by its beauty, with its value in the vulgar medium of pounds, shillings and pence. I often think that if beer were forty shillings a bottle you would see it standing in buckets in rows at luncheon time by the table of every profiteer. What would be the fate of precious stones ?

I have said enough to let you know how I, as

GEOLOGISTS

an outsider and an ignoramus, can see both the romance and the immense practical value of this science of geology, and its value in the search for truth. I feel a peculiar pleasure in being asked to open a building which, in fullness of time, may lead to the further pursuit of this great science, and my best wish for Liverpool is that you may take full advantage of it, and that you may send out into the British Empire, and the wide world beyond it, men such as we can still send from this country : men not only of knowledge, of practical experience, and of imagination, but men of strength and men of character, men who will help at the same time to spread knowledge of their science, knowledge of that great country from which they have sprung, and possibly knowledge, too, of that great University which gave them the specialised training which adapted them for their life's task.

LIBRARIES

*Speech delivered at the opening of the
Gray's Inn Library Extension,
July 18, 1929.*

IN what spirit ought we to enter a library? As usual, the truth has been revealed to us through the mouths of babes and sucklings. Who was it that, when he entered a library, grinned like an ogre and swung his arms like the sails of a wind-mill and cried, "Prodigious," till the roof rang, but Dominie Sampson? And he it was who, in placing a book on the shelf, took far longer than had been anticipated, because every day he remained stationary on the rungs of the ladder that led up to the shelves and read each book before he put it in, until his skirts were plucked by the footman who told him the next meal was ready.

And one other child, the immortal and ever-blessed Charles Lamb: "What a place to be in is an old library! It seems as though all the souls of all the writers that have bequeathed their labours to these Bodleians were reposing here, as in some dormitory or middle state. I do not want to handle, to profane the leaves, their winding-sheets. I could as soon dislodge a shade. I seem

LIBRARIES

to inhale learning, walking amid their foliage ; and the odour of their old moth-scented coverings is fragrant as the first bloom of those scintial apples which grew amid the happy orchard. . . .”

Now truth lies in amalgamating the thoughts and the emotions of those two great children. How different it is when we come from them to the highbrow of modern times, and as I read in one of our most illustrious periodicals, published about a century ago, to which the intellect of Great Britain contributed, I read these words : “ As conservatories of mental treasures, their value in times of darkness and barbarity was incalculable ; and even in these happier days, when men are incited to explore new regions of thought, they command respect, as depots of methodical and well-ordered references for the researches of the curious. But what in one state of society is invaluable may at another be worthless ; and the progress which the world has made within a very few centuries has considerably reduced the estimation which is due to such establishments. We will say more. . . .”

But we will not listen to it. That is the right mood—the mood of the children. And I think it is very interesting to reflect that in the earliest days of Gray’s Inn Library, a man who was well-known throughout Europe said that the multiplication of books is a great evil. And he said four centuries ago—words which might have been

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

uttered to-day—that everybody wants to write to-day. So much for Martin Luther. Would he had been living now ! I do not utter those words in the sense the late Home Secretary would have uttered them. I utter them—but I leave the rest to your imagination.

As I look around this room I notice that as yet you have no inscription, no text, no quotation ; and I remember reading that long, long ago in the National Library of Egypt, not in the days of King Fuad, but in the days of King Ptolemy, over that library there were just these words, “ The nourishment of the soul.” Or, as we are told by another authority, “ The medicine of the mind.” Extraordinarily apt. And yet the last quotation makes me pray to be saved from all men who would offer me prescriptions either in literature or in what I want to read.

There are no greater bores in the world than those who ask you what is the best book you have read lately ; what book has helped you most ; to which I always want to answer as that happy man did : “ The book that has helped me most has not yet been written.” Or, again, the bores of the last generation who were always compiling lists of the hundred best books, or the fifty best books, or of the twenty-five best books, or what would you like to be left with on a desert island. I remember the oddest collection of famous books ever made was made by Diderot,

LIBRARIES

who once said if he had to have only three books he would choose Moses and Homer and Richardson. That gives him a select choice of feminine society on his desert island—Clarissa, Nausicaa, and Potiphar's wife.

But, you know as well as I do, there are libraries and libraries, and if I may take an example of one which contains nearly everything that makes a library impossible from my point of view, I would like to say a word about the library at the House of Commons.

It is full of what Lamb calls "biblia abiblia." There are whole rooms full of books, none of which I should ever look at if I were alone with them on a desert island for the rest of my life. Going there if you are in search of anything that you want, anything your spirit needs, is very like going into a cellar of which the owner has boasted to you, and you find it contains nothing but saline draughts instead of all the choice products of vineyards whose names are music in the ear.

My idea of a library is one that has inscribed over it that inscription which was chosen by a junior naval officer for his destroyer: *Ut veniant omnes*—"Let them all come." A library cannot be too catholic. A library should be a place into which you can be flung at any time and you will find your own pasturage. It should be to me as the briar patch was to

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Brer Rabbit : “ Brer Fox,” he said, “ You may boil me if you like, you may skin me if you like, but for the Lord’s sake don’t throw me into that briar patch.” And he threw him into the briar patch and Brer Rabbit scuttled off and his last word was, “ Born and bred in a briar patch, Brer Fox,” and people who have been born and bred in libraries merely want to be flung into the middle of them and see on the walls, “ Ut Veniant Omnes.”

I am engaged at this moment in moving with my own hands the books I have had removed from Downing Street, and finding places for them on my shelves, and there jostled together lie friends of all kinds, at the moment, on the floor. You may find Sir Thomas Browne’s *Urn Burial* cheek by jowl with *Jorrock*s, and you may find Dugdale’s *Monasticon* in morocco next to the cardboard-covered sketches of Caran d’Ache. I only mention the dead, you notice, because I have so much fear lest, in mentioning the living I should be moving from the world of books into the world of advertisement, because I have trembled on the edge of that before now.

After all, that is the real use of a library, it is the variety, and it is the -checking of one thing against another. You may stuff yourself with Stubbs and you may know everything about the Rise of the British Constitution in Plantagenet times ; but how much less a man you are if you are not equally

LIBRARIES

familiar with *Piers Plowman* and know from his pages that the Englishman of Plantagenet days is the same Englishman with whom you have to work to-day—the same Englishman in his strength and in his weakness, in his heroism, and in his humour, the Englishman immutable and eternal.

And I rejoice to think that this Library which it is my privilege to declare open to-day is one to which my favourite motto applies, in so far as you can apply it in a foundation of this dignity and in a space that is not illimitable, and I like to think that this Inn which was in existence with its Library when the bowman was trailing his lonely way through English lanes coming back from Agincourt and seeking his home, when Drake was playing bowls, on that morning when the light snow was falling and the King walked to Whitehall for the last time, in those days when her sons left England to lay their bones in the soil of France, this Library and this Inn flourished, and my wish and prayer to-day is that they may live and flourish to be an ornament to England for as many years as have passed and for longer.

I have the greatest pleasure and the greatest pride in declaring to you that this Library, an integral part of this great Inn, is now open and for ever.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

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LIBRARIES

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VII

SUCCESS IS NOT ENOUGH
FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE
FIND YOURSELVES !
PIETY AND TRUE LEARNING
BE READY !

SUCCESS IS NOT ENOUGH

*From a speech delivered in the
Senate House of Cambridge University on the opening
of the Scott Polar Research Institute,
November 16, 1934*

WE are gathered together in this little ceremony to declare open the Scott Polar Research Institute. That building has been erected as a testimony, as it were, to certain aspirations, if I may so call them, that are common throughout the world, the desire for adventure, for knowledge, for exploration, for research, for curiosity into the secrets of Nature common to men of all countries of the world. We share that desire, that aspiration and that curiosity in this country no less than in any other.

Every continent and every island in the world has its own tales of heroism and fortitude, tales which often have come down from generation to generation to stir the hearts of men, tales of men many of whom have never been known and never will be known, and are buried with the countless, nameless heroes under every ocean and on every strand throughout the world.

Not least is this the case in those strange, distant

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

polar worlds, whether in the north or in the south. The north polar world lies, as it were, at the back-door of our own country and of those Scandinavian countries to which we are so closely akin and from which, I rejoice to think, some representatives have come to-day to share in our celebration. The names of Frobisher and Davis from those spacious Elizabethan days are as fresh to all who care for these things as they were in the days of Elizabeth herself ; and with the names of Hudson, Parry and Franklin they still resound for all those whose inner heart-strings vibrate to the trumpet call of adventure.

It is but in recent times that such work as was done in the north has been done in the south—a mere paltry century or little more ago. And among those names perhaps two in our own time—Shackleton and Scott—stand out particularly. But when we mention their names, let us never forget the heroes and the unknown men whose names have not lived but who shared in their work and in the work of those before them ; whose courage, whose valour and whose endurance was no less than theirs, but who, through circumstances, have passed away unknown and unrecorded. It seems to me that no better monument to these men could be erected than the one which we are opening and dedicating to-day. Because, after all, all exploration—and particularly Arctic and Antarctic exploration—is not only a battle, but it is a

SUCCESS IS NOT ENOUGH

prolonged war ; and for battle and war you need strategy and you need carefully laid plans. This building provides a library of experience for those who are led, as men are to-day, to this work.

While we are thinking of the Institute I think we ought just to remember what is going on around us to-day. We hear so much, and read so much, about the decadence of the young generation, and the futility of the old men. Of the latter it is not my duty to speak this afternoon, but I want to say something about the young men.

The Elizabethan spirit is not only not dead, it is rampant at this very moment. There is a national expedition of young men to Graham Land in the Antarctic, and they started on their expedition by sailing across the Atlantic in the manner of their forefathers ; Oxford has organised an Arctic expedition led by a son of Sir Ernest Shackleton ; the Greenland ice-cap has been crossed by two young men alone ; and there was a private expedition from Cambridge to Greenland and Baffin Island which went this summer. And within the last few years this old University of ours produced a man—a boy, I was going to say—whom I had the pleasure of knowing—Gino Watkins, who, if he had lived, might have ranked, and in the opinion of men qualified to judge would have ranked, among the greatest of polar explorers. They talk about decadence in this country !

Now I wish to say a few words to you about the

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

man (and those who worked with him) to whom this Institute is dedicated. It is very difficult in a few words to get clearly across to you what in my view the lives of those men have to teach us. One lesson to me is clear. Nurse Cavell is reported to have said just before her death that patriotism is not enough, and I say that success is not enough. Success may be a poor thing. Success is not necessarily a matter to which you should devote your whole life. There are many things greater. In thinking of Scott let us never forget that he was a sailor first and last and all the time, an officer in the Royal Navy. Let us ask ourselves—those of us who have studied naval history and are familiar with the names of naval heroes through the centuries—if there be not one engagement and one man of whom we would say that his memory has lasted vividly in the hearts of his fellow-countrymen and always will. That man is Sir Richard Grenville, who fought in the *Revenge* in the reign of Elizabeth. He was beaten and he was killed. He did not have what this world would call success. How many successful people are remembered with Grenville as an inspiration for Englishmen?

Scott had to fight a foe more cunning, more resourceful and more implacable even than the Spaniard of Elizabeth's reign. He fought the elements and nature. Do you remember that in one of the last letters he wrote, at the end of his toil and of his endurance, "How much better it

SUCCESS IS NOT ENOUGH

has been than lounging in too great comfort at home"? That is a tremendous sentence, a simple sentence by a simple man which puts into a few simple words that profound truth with which you are all so familiar in your Browning :

. . . " And so I live, you see,
Go through the world, try, prove, reject,
Prefer, still struggling to effect
My warfare ; happy that I can
Be crossed and thwarted as a man,
Not left in God's contempt apart,
With ghastly smooth life, dead at heart,
Tame in earth's paddock as her prize."

From Scott, in that last chapter, in him and in his friends, was burnt out, as by the refiner's fire, every thought of self. All that human foresight, human skill could achieve had been done. Nothing had been left to chance. But human will and human strength were left in vain to fight that last fight. And at that moment Scott wrote : " For my own sake I do not regret this journey, which has shown that Englishmen can endure hardship, help one another and meet death with as great a fortitude as ever in the past."

That message came back to England two years before the Great War ; and no man can know how the light of that torch that they lifted in the distant Antarctic illuminated the path of millions of men in the Great War in Europe. Lady Hilton Young has told me that she had innumerable letters from

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

the trenches in which men told her how they were fortified in the horrors through which they had to live by thinking of the horrors through which Scott and his men lived until the end, and by the endurance with which they faced those terrors.

The last choice that lay before them, when all was accomplished, was the choice of death at their own hands or death as it should come to them. I dare say many of you remember a passage in the *Phædo* where that very question was debated. Socrates said that man was placed on guard, he had his post in life, and that nothing should make him leave that post until the trumpet sounded for his recall. A man's life is not his own. It was the voice of the trump of God which was to sound the time when he was to fall out. They heard that trumpet as they looked out from the doors of their tent, and saw the swift remorseless fingers of inexorable fate weaving their shroud of snow. Then they were content. Their work was done. They had run their course, they had kept the faith to their own country, to their own ideals, to their own best selves and to one another ; and because they had conquered self, and because they possessed their own souls, they will live in the hearts of their fellow-countrymen and in every part of the world till the end of time.

FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE

*The Rectorial Address at Glasgow University,
January 20, 1930*

THIS is the first occasion on which I have had the pleasure of meeting my constituents since they did me the honour of electing me Lord Rector of this famous University. You have a custom, as I understand, of choosing your Lord Rector from among those engaged in public affairs ; and I am not surprised to learn that there are many who would welcome a wider field of selection. There are obvious drawbacks in inviting one who is or has been a Minister of the Crown to address you in his capacity as Lord Rector. You cannot expect from him the skill in composition or the felicity of language which you would rightly expect from a Barrie, a Kipling or a Shaw. You cannot look for the learning to which you are accustomed in your distinguished Principal. But, difficult as it may be for the statesman to undertake a task for the accomplishment of which so many men are better equipped, yet perhaps he has one peculiar qualification : his life is spent in dealing with men among facts, or, if you like it better,

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

with facts among men—and for that purpose he requires patience, sympathy, common sense, imagination (which has been well defined as the faculty of seeing and tracing consequence) and again patience. And it may not be unhelpful to the students of Glasgow University if for a brief hour I speak to them not of philosophy or literature or art, but of certain everyday aspects of this world in which we live, this post-war world, as they appear to one who has endeavoured to exercise, not always with success, those qualities which I have just enumerated. For few of you will be qualified to lead a student's life in after years. You will pass out in due course into the larger world that lies beyond the academic walls, and by your conduct in that world you will be judged. So let one who is still in the thick of the struggle speak in his own way to those who are still on the threshold.

It is in many ways far more easy to speak across the centuries than from one generation to another. And yet, in order that I may speak to you what is in my mind, I must recall for a moment my first long vacation. It was one evening in June. The long day had at length faded into warm twilight. The hills, shrouded where they rose from the valleys, were cut like indigo-coloured cameos against the lingering afterglow. I was walking slowly across a wide common in Worcestershire, waiting for the warning light of the great beacon

FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE

on Malvern which was to give the signal for the chain of beacons running north to carry the glad news of the jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign. How often in our history had these same hills sent out their fiery message, to Briton and Roman, to Saxon and Dane. But this night it was a message of rejoicing and thanksgiving and pride to the inheritors of twenty centuries of racial, religious, political, and economic struggles. So this night at the appointed hour the first flame shot up on Malvern, and one by one each hill took up the tale, until I stood in the middle of a vast illuminated circle, the nearer fires showing the people attending them, and the remoter dwindling in size until they merely blazed as stars on the horizon.

And what were our thoughts when we had sung "God Save the Queen" and wandered by our several ways homeward through the scented lanes? If the ordinary man on that night had felt able or disposed to think, to arrange his thoughts and put them into words, he would have said that civilisation had made great strides in the last half-century, and that what had been won would be kept and the ground gained used as a fresh starting-point; that the age was distinguished from the old unquiet times by a sense of security, and that Progress (a word much on men's lips in those years) would henceforth be constant. And, indeed, he would draw in such thoughts from the very atmosphere of his environment: nor were they unreasonable

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

on any cursory examination of the times. We had read in our histories of wars—wars civil, religious and dynastic—of the rise and fall of kingdoms and empires ; but all these things, though of fascinating interest, were as a tale that is told. They belonged to a past which had gone for ever and could never be repeated. True, the Roman Empire had broken up and out of its fragments had been compounded in the fullness of time the Europe that we knew. But this again was history. Modern civilisation and the British Empire were different ; they were founded on the rock.

But of those who, as children, watched with me that night, none had come to middle age before the fiery cross flew round the world and from every sea came again home the descendants of those who had watched the beacons when Duke William came to England, to fight for what they and we had deemed impregnable.

The new world had come, and no one knew it. Once more history was being written in letters of fire and blood, faster and more terrible than ever before, and for four years men climbed to the doors of heaven and sank to the gates of hell. And after four years there was peace and we hardly recognised it ; and the new world had come and many did not know it. Much we did know. We knew that the cold courage and tenacity of our race had stood the test ; we knew that a million

FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE

of our best men were dead or disabled ; we knew that the civilisation of Western Europe, built up through endless years, had been saved as by a miracle, for we had seen it sliding down into the abyss. We saw the boundaries of Europe once more fluid ; politically, the work of generations compressed into a *lustrum* and whole peoples with responsibilities thrust upon them, for which their previous experience had but little prepared them. And over all, exhaustion and desire. Desire for what, no man could tell. Yet this was to be expected. Could the world have been through such a labour and no portent be seen ? After the storm, should there not be calm, and would not the sun come out and the world be more beautiful than before ?

It was but slowly and bitterly that men learned that the sins of the world must be paid for, and that after four years of slaughter and destruction many times four years would be needed to repair even part of what had been lost. The new world is here ; and what is our part in it ? But before we can give a reply to this question, let us consider briefly in what the newness consists, at home, on the Continent, and overseas.

At home the advent of democracy is the most pregnant change, affecting our government internally and externally, and altering profoundly for good or ill our outlook in every direction. I have no desire to discuss democracy as a political

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

system. To the student and historian it is a subject of profound interest, to the specialist in the theory of constitutional history a fascinating subject to play with. But to the statesman it is a fact. It is the tool with which he has to work. It is the environment in conformity with which he has to act. No matter to him whether the system be ideal or not, whether it be the best adapted to his task, it is for him to labour unceasingly to make men understand the words which are for ever on their lips ; to give them faith in themselves and to warn them of the infinite patience and understanding which will be needed in the practical application of their creed.

The task of democracy is hard enough in these little islands, but upon its success or failure hangs the fortune of half the world—nay, more, of the whole world itself. Economically we have travelled far from the complacency of pre-war days. Complacency, rightly or wrongly considered to be a characteristic of the Victorian age, perished with much else in the war, and gave place to introspection and self-questioning, doubts and fears, only too natural when the appalling tension of four years was suddenly relaxed, and industry, which had been working in a ring fence in defiance of every economic law, had once more to adapt itself to the conditions imposed by international competition.

On the other hand, there has, in my view, been

FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE

a quickening of the people. Never has there been such a real and general desire for knowledge. The quest for learning, for so long a glorious characteristic of your race, has sprung up south of the border and is even now no less widespread south of the border than it has been to the north.

On the continent the map has been re-drawn ; old empires have vanished ; new countries have come to life. The experiment of democracy has been or is being tried in nearly every country in Europe ; and where democracy, as we understand the word, has for the time being failed, new methods of government are being tried, the results of which are being anxiously watched in other countries than their own. The economic life of Europe has been affected by the comparatively small size of some of the newly-formed nations, and the present resolution of large and small alike to be as self-contained industrially as carefully-devised tariff systems can make them.

And over nearly all Europe hang the war debts ; and in Europe and Asia are millions of graves in which are laid the flower of their generation, the generation that grew to manhood from 1914-1918, the generation that represented the oldest and most stable civilisations in the world.

But it may well be that in the future, near or distant, the changes that have taken place within the British Empire overseas will most affect the world. The war, as in so much else, merely

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

hastened a process already begun. A century of evolution was compressed into half a decade. The great Dominions have become autonomous ; they are in every respect equal partners with the mother country ; the link is the Crown and not Parliament. British India is making her first steps on the road which in the fullness of time is to lead her to self-government.

We find ourselves, then, to-day in a world where the most civilised nations ardently desire peace ; where they are resolved that so far as lies in their power they will not tolerate aggressive war. They have endeavoured, not without success, to bind the nations into a League, and in that League are included all the component parts of the British Empire. And that Empire represents a League of Nations of its own, which keeps the peace over a quarter of the whole globe and amongst a quarter of the inhabitants thereof. Of that Empire the great majority of its population is found in India, that vast continent which for unnumbered centuries was the battle-field of Asia and where the Pax Britannica has brought her peoples a peace of which they had never dreamed.

Would it be an exaggeration to view our Empire as a whole, as Gibbon viewed the " Union and Internal Prosperity of the Roman Empire in the Age of the Antonines " ? Let me read to you Dr. Mackail's paraphrase of that famous chapter, the title of which I have just quoted.

FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE

“ The spectacle,” he writes, “ there presented to us is of an organised empire, extending from the Clyde to the Euphrates, from Hungary to the Sahara, based on broad foundations, civilised, prosperous, well administered, seemingly secure. Throughout it there was, with hardly an exception, profound internal peace. Agriculture, industry, and commerce flourished. The population of the lands within Roman Government exceeded anything reached afterwards until the nineteenth century. Wealth was lavished on public improvements and philanthropic institutions. The armies were well equipped and disciplined. Civil administration was in the hands of an able and highly organised civil service. Education was being extended ; provincial Universities were founded and attended by crowds of students. The arts of sculpture, music, architecture, were at a high level. The Roman world had settled down to take its ease. External causes of collapse were distant. The intermittent Persian wars on a fluctuating frontier had little result, except indeed for the cumulative drain of vital and material resources. The northern peril was always there in the background, as it had always been since the days of Herodotus. But it was no greater than it had been in the times of Marius or Germanicus. No material impression was made on the Empire by the barbarians during two hundred and fifty years after the destruction by the Germans of the

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth Legions. It was more than a century later still before any Roman territory was formally ceded to an enemy."

To Roman and barbarian alike, Rome seemed eternal, the one fixed point in the firmament, the one rock against which the waves might beat and beat in vain. Yet we know that causes of decay were already at work in that great Empire, that its dissolution was inevitable, and that from its dissolution sprang a thousand years of war. What will the historian, a millennium hence, have to say of us to-day?

It would be unprofitable for me here to search for signs of decay in the body politic. True, a modern Juvenal need have no lack of material for his satire. I do not wish to be led down any by-ways, however interesting or however curious. Let me remind you of what I said earlier in my address, that the most pregnant change in this new world is the advent of democracy. Even to us, old in constitutional government, old in time and experienced beyond other nations, representative government based on universal suffrage has come as in a night. And on us lies a responsibility greater than has been laid on any other country, for we have not only to learn to govern ourselves, but to show many races, alien from us in language, in custom and in tradition, old in their own culture, how to apply our methods of self-government to

FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE

their own peoples. And more : to us are looking with expectation the indigenous inhabitants of Africa, confident in our power to give them peace and justice and to help them to raise themselves in the scale of civilisation. And while this work goes on—the work of generations, perhaps of centuries—the world is contracting and scientific invention by flying, by wireless, by the motor car, by films and by gramophone is jostling the peoples of the world together. He would be a bold prophet who would tell us whether these things will make for the elevation of mankind or for his degradation.

I have tried to put before you our task as I see it, and as I have spoken of the Roman Empire I would remind you of the words used by Ennius. *Moribus stat res Romana*—on character the Roman State is founded. It was because these words were forgotten, because the Roman character perished, that the Empire perished, and the world was plunged again into barbarism.

Our responsibilities are no less than those of Rome : our duty to-day is to rear upon peace, character. The foundation of the British Empire is character. Unless we build on the ancient virtues of duty, truth and patriotism, our experiment in democracy will fail and the dissolution of our Empire will be a question of years.

I have used the word patriotism on purpose

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

because, rightly used, it is a potent force for good. At its best it is a noble virtue. It derives strength from the fact that it is a fundamental primitive instinct, an instinct common to higher and lower civilisations, attaching itself to the earliest memories of childhood, to the fields and woods and streams amongst which we grew up. The highest form of human altruism has been inspired by patriotism. Not only with soldiers and sailors, but with scholars, engineers and business men, service of their country has been the deepest motive of their work. The world is enriched by the several contributions of nations, and it seems to me that depreciation of patriotism cannot really help but may rather hinder international co-operation. You cannot make the world better by abandoning one of the most powerful motives to noble action that the world has yet known. It is not unlike the efforts of those—and we have all met them—who think that they can hasten the day of the Brotherhood of Man by being rude and offensive to members of their own family.

But we must never forget that patriotism is not an intellectual concept. It is an emotion, and is therefore capable of being enlisted or exploited for ignoble ends. It is indeed “the last refuge of a scoundrel” when it is used as a cloak of avarice and in the spirit of domination. Pure patriotism, which asks nothing and seeks nothing, which gives service because it “can no other,” is a

FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE

necessary ingredient in the character upon which a great democracy is built. Indeed, if the word be used in its widest sense and in its highest, it comprises the whole duty of man as a citizen. I should like to remind you of what Joseph Conrad said on this same subject, for he was able to put into more telling and concise phrase what I have been trying to express to you.

“Patriotism,” he said, “is a somewhat discredited sentiment, because the delicacy of our humanitarianism regards it as a relic of barbarism. . . . It requires a certain greatness of soul to interpret patriotism worthily; or else a sincerity of feeling denied to the vulgar refinement of modern thought; which cannot understand the august simplicity of a sentiment proceeding from the very nature of things and men.”

Truth seems such a simple thing. Yet perhaps it is the one virtue more quickly pushed out of the way and trampled on than all the other virtues rolled into one. Yet we English and Scots hold it in high regard, and our most valuable international asset is that our word is still regarded as our bond. Let us hold fast by this. You will remember how Ammian wrote that the time had come when the Roman's word could no longer be trusted: that was the beginning of the end. Men have survived breaches of faith in domestic politics: no empire could survive a breach of faith between two of its component parts.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Now, if I be right in my contention that our national character is the only foundation on which an abiding democracy can be built, and further, that on that character more than on the sword depends the permanence of the empire, what can we do, how can we play our part, to prepare ourselves for the testing time of the next century? It so happened that I said a few words some five years ago which have a bearing on this subject. "The idea of particular people," I observed, "pursuing learning has been familiar for scores of centuries, but the idea of preparing the minds of whole classes or communities for co-operation and common action by a training in common ideas is a comparatively new one. That is the gigantic task to which we are committed." The necessity for this arises from the fact that democracy is with us. The health of the whole is dependent on the health of each unit. Co-operation has a far wider significance than mere class co-operation, and ideas must needs be more comprehending and more comprehensive than can be begotten of class consciousness.

You may remember I said that never, in my opinion, had there been a more widespread desire for knowledge than is found to-day up and down the land. The people are waiting to be fed. Great as has been the work of our universities, I believe that it will be far greater in the future. But the living torchbearers are the generation that is even

FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE

now going forth from your colleges into the world. Great have been your privileges ; learning, old and new, has been yours to grasp and you have unconsciously been drinking in the traditions of the ages and breathing the influence of centuries of high endeavour. On you above all of your generation, on you, members of the universities, it rests to repay, as far as you are able, and each in his vocation, the debt you owe to those who have gone before you, and who, by their piety and forethought, made it possible for you to obtain these blessings. You go out into all the world—in the Church, in Medicine, and in Law, in the Civil Service of this country, of India, and of the Colonies, in a hundred trades and businesses. And wherever you go you will influence your fellows because of your sojourn here. It is that influence which is all-pervasive, and by the character you display, your country will be judged.

And this is true outside Britain, whether you be Viceroy of India, or a railwayman, or a trader on the African coast. Over vast tracts of the Empire the indigenous population can only judge of Great Britain by their knowledge of the character of the one or two white men who live among them, or even by the demeanour of the passing visitor. And if they see truth and loyalty, fair play and self-control exhibited in such individuals, that will be their conception of the nation ; and the nation's work in governing, controlling and advising is to

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

that extent made more easy instead of more difficult. The day that we cease to be worthy of respect, that day the foundations of the Colonial Empire crack.

Your influence at home may be no less. Few of you perhaps will enter public life, but you will all have your own sphere of influence. Let the old Scottish character irradiate your neighbourhood. Show what a Scottish university stands for. From these centres should come the leaven that leavens the whole ; in these centres should be formed Character for all who seek it.

Freedom and discipline alone can make a living and vivifying democracy. These two words, which to the thoughtless are antinomies, have become complementary, and each is only capable of rising to the fullness of its integrity by admixture with the other. Freedom without discipline soon degenerates into licence, by which many a state has perished. Discipline without freedom will make in time a nation of slaves. Freedom will give the spirit, and discipline the responsibility ; and a people founded on these will themselves live, and be the means of life-giving to others. Worldly success may be ours as individuals, or it may not. There will be no lack of men to fight for the prizes of the world, but we can each of us play our part in raising rather than depressing the soul of the great country to which we belong.

I am preaching no easy doctrine, nor is it new in Glasgow. There could be no fitter nursery for the

FREEDOM AND DISCIPLINE

spirit I would inculcate in you than this great city. For generations, City and University have acted and reacted upon one another. Constant and generous have been the gifts of Glasgow to her University. Let Glasgow never forget, if I may quote the words of Principal Story, "the testimony the University has borne to the Empire of idea—to the spiritual as nobler than the material; to the meanness of mammon worship, and the real excellence of the life of patient study, of earnest thought, of unselfish endeavour, of loyalty to truth." These things are of the very stuff of character, and your character should be no cloistered virtue, formed as it is in a great city linked by ties of kindred and of trade to every English-speaking country in the world.

Glasgow is no cloistered university. In Cambridge, with her wide horizon and her fenland stretching to infinity, in St. Andrews, with her grey ruins washed by the grey sea, you may live, the world forgetting, and by the world forgot. But here you cannot escape from the world if you would. And before you have been here a year the least imaginative of you will know that there are dragons to be fought and women's honour to be defended to-day as in the age of chivalry. The lofty tenements, the grim, grey streets, the smoking chimneys, the life and labour of the city call with united voice "come over and help us." And, above all, you will never forget the ceaseless

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

reverberations of the hammers in the shipyards, hammering in the rivets with insistent iteration. On the honesty of the riveter's work hangs the lives of men. Perhaps on the honesty of our work may hang their souls as well.

Ladies and gentlemen, long is your roll of illustrious names—in medicine, in law, in science, in the humanities—but as one who was a very ordinary undergraduate, and dreamed dreams in those far-off Victorian days, I speak to you undergraduates who are probably not unlike what I was. And I would just say this in conclusion. Proud as your University may rightly be of her great men, prouder still will she be if the character of her sons, the rank and file of her sons, causes their generation to rise up and call them blessed.

FIND YOURSELVES !

*The Installation Address as Chancellor of St. Andrews University,
May 10, 1930*

You have conferred upon me the greatest honour which it is in your power to bestow, and the value of that honour has been enhanced by the generous terms in which my name was submitted and approved. Believe me, I value your confidence and I am grateful to you beyond power of expression.

It is not for me to wonder why you have crossed the border for your Chancellor. Yet by coming to England, you have, shall I say, balanced an appointment which you made when George II was king. So far as your leading men were concerned, you were reluctant to change your allegiance after the revolution of 1688, but fifty-seven years later you presented to this high office the victor of Culloden.

It seems only characteristic of the impartiality of an intellectual corporation that you should now, when victor and vanquished are alike dust, place the Duke of Cumberland's robe on the shoulders of a descendant of one of those humble clansmen who withstood the might of England on that fatal moor, and who sacrificed his home, as he would

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

have yielded up his life, for those unhappy Stuarts who never called on Highland loyalty in vain.

Loyalties to far-off times, to systems that have passed away, and passed away for ever, are not inconsistent with loyalty to what is best in the present. Sprung from the loins of the Mediæval Church as are the colleges of our ancient universities, their appeal to us in the twentieth century touches our hearts and our imagination in ways undreamt of by their founders.

Guided by a profound natural instinct, they regarded the university as an oasis in the desert of the workaday world, a retreat for scholarship and study, monastic alike in its retreat and in the collegiate life. Hence the foundations were remote from crowded cities or formed of themselves a *rus in urbe*. Cambridge rose amongst the inhospitable fens, St. Andrews on the rocky coast of Fife, Oxford among her meadows and sedgy streams, whose very names are music and make our hearts ache for the green England which Chaucer loved.

You may remember how Cardinal Newman, when a youth of eighteen, was leaving Oxford for the Long Vacation and entered into casual conversation with an elderly stranger who was his fellow traveller on the coach. The stranger—for it was only later that he knew him as the great academical luminary of the day—urged that it was worth the consideration of the Government whether Oxford should not stand in a domain of its own.

FIND YOURSELVES !

“ An ample range,” he continued, “ should be turned into wood and meadow, and the university should be approached on all sides by a magnificent park with fine trees in groups and groves and avenues and with glimpses and views of the fair city as the traveller drew near it. There is nothing surely absurd in the idea, for what has a better claim to the purest and fairest possessions of Nature than the seat of wisdom ? ” And Newman adds that his companion did but express the tradition of ages and the instinct of mankind.

The dream of the Oxford scholar may never literally be realised, but the spirit is found in each mediæval foundation. As our ancestors looked to right learning to assuage the asperities of life in their time, so we are turning with new hope to our universities to provide men who will guide us through the troublous days to come.

It was Walter Scott who said, “ When Scotland was torn with convulsions and the battle-brand was yet red, our forefathers had sat down to devise the means of spreading the blessings of knowledge among their posterity as the most effective means of preventing those dark and bloody times from recurring.”

Scott and Newman alike saw the university ideal, the light that shines through the darkness, draws men to it and fills them with the spirit of the torch-bearer. It was during the rude, cruel years of what we call the Middle Ages that the

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

universities came into being, carrying on traditions which were already old when the barbarians swept through Europe. Was it not of Marseilles that Tacitus said, "It is a school in which Greek politeness was happily blended and tempered with provincial strictness"? Who would not wish to say that of his own university to-day? Possibly Gilbert had something of the sort in his mind when he spoke of Robin Oakapple combining the manners of a marquis with the morals of a Methodist.

The years of stark horror through which we passed a little more than ten years ago have created an ardent desire for learning through all classes of our people; as though they, too, felt instinctively that "spreading the blessings of knowledge among their posterity may be the most effective means of preventing those dark and bloody times from recurring."

We find a like motive at work on the Continent, for Villari tells us how the Signory of Florence founded their university at the time of the grievous visitation of the Black Death. They hoped to increase their population by drawing residents from other cities and other countries, and they believed that the demoralisation of all classes, the dreadful aftermath of plague as of war, might be cured by devotion to study and learning.

Now why should men desire a university education? I think the answer is clear, and it is in itself a tribute of the highest kind to our universities

FIND YOURSELVES !

and to their traditions. It is because the best knowledge is there, and it can be ours if we choose to work for it.

Whatever standards may have been debased in our country, the university standards are as high as ever, and the only class distinctions which exist in the examination lists are those of quality. The universities are drawing the pupils by their learning and their power of imparting it, and there is hardly a city in Great Britain that would not have its own university if it could.

Nor is learning all. In the collegiate universities—those, I mean, where the students live together or are at all events conscious of a common life—there is the constant clash of personality, the interchange of ideas, the questionings, the testing of opinion, the growth of knowledge of human nature, all those things that no books can give and that can only be obtained by that free intercourse which is most natural and most easy in the elastic formative years of undergraduate life.

From his own studies, and from such intercourse as I have endeavoured to describe, a man should find himself. And what pilgrimages some of us have to undergo before that essential knowledge is revealed! He should learn to think. He should become "*capax*." By that I mean he should know the tool needed for the job, where to look for it, and how to use it.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Yet, though I have laid much stress, and rightly, on such words as learning and knowledge, there is one which I value more highly, which, if not inborn, it should be your chief endeavour to acquire ; and that is wisdom. And I would pause here merely to suggest one or two lines of thought to be pursued at your leisure, lest you fail to remember that the acquisition of knowledge is not the whole duty of man.

It is worth remembering that the first bribe offered to our first parents was, “ Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil,” or, in other words, a promise to gratify curiosity. This playing, as the devil would, on the weak side of what may be a perfectly honourable motive, gives you an interesting sidelight on that presumptuousness of mere knowledge of which innumerable instances will readily occur to your mind.

Can we not say that knowledge is relative in this respect, that alleged facts tend to be displaced and disproved by the emergence of new facts, whereas wisdom, which is of the spirit, and is indeed itself the spirit in which knowledge is applied, is absolute ?

Knowledge is the acquisition of the Hows and Whys of things, and therefore is apt to be unrelated. Wisdom in herself is continuity. As so often happens, you have an eternal truth in an old saw, “ Knowledge comes, but Wisdom lingers.”

You may have vast knowledge but little

FIND YOURSELVES !

wisdom, as you may have much wisdom but little knowledge. Wisdom is hard to define, but you are always aware of it when you find it, and you instinctively stand hat in hand before it. Knowledge and cleverness (I am never very clear as to the meaning of that word) interest and amuse. But who does not know the thrill with which he may chance from time to time on one or two lines, perhaps some half-dozen words, by some singer three thousand years ago, how they strike back across the ages with all the wisdom of mankind learned by sweat and blood when Earth was young ?

Pray above all things to be delivered from the surfeit of mere knowledge which in the conduct of affairs entrusted to us, and in the ordering of our inner lives, brings unfaith and confusion. Let us correct the irreverence of mere knowledge by the innate decency of wisdom.

But before I was lead away by that great word Wisdom, I said that in my opinion one of the most valuable results of life in a university was that it enabled a man to find himself. There is one lifelong possession we ought to carry with us from a university, though I am not sure it is esteemed a virtue in these days. That is a proper sense of perspective, with a corresponding sense of values and the modesty appropriate thereto. The lonely student is apt to think too much of his own peculiar department of learning, to

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

over-estimate his own capacity to appreciate other departments of learning.

In a university, as in the House of Commons, we find our level ; each one is but a unit in a great company ; we realise that the truths we know are but fragments of a great whole ; we visualise the march of knowledge as the march of a great army.

In boyhood the world seems so vast, and time eternal, that it is only by degrees it is borne in on us that our own field is limited, and that there will be a term to our usefulness. And it may be only later that we realise what need there is for the best that we can give, and how important it is that we should see how and where we can give it. So many men drift into their life work with no careful examination of themselves and their own qualities, and of their fitness for the environment in which they find themselves. Happy are those who have sufficient imagination to consecrate themselves in their youth to the work wherein their own powers and character will have the best chance of developing and proving of service to the world. But most of us are ordinary men ; and, after all, a nation lives by the quality of her ordinary men. What can we ordinary men do to prepare ourselves for our manhood ? What can we learn in our university ?

I suppose it is natural that, when an elderly man attempts to point out the road to those who

FIND YOURSELVES !

come after, he is apt to urge on them the practice of those virtues in which he himself is most conscious of his own deficiency. The essential virtue, if you are to make anything of your life, is diligence ; it does not matter what word you choose if you understand what you mean by it. Concentration, industry, hard work, are all synonymous ; or if you like to draw on the vocabulary of the street, “ plugging ” or “ sticking it ” will give you the essential meaning with less elegance but more vigour.

Diligence seems so commonplace that when we see a great accomplishment of learning, of discovery, in statesmanship, in what you will, we are always inclined to attribute it to genius, to good fortune, to anything and everything except that very power of concentration and continuous work which is its very foundation. And this belief is sometimes fostered by a human weakness not unknown amongst those who have dazzled the eyes of their own contemporaries.

There is a temptation to make men believe that your success is due less to that capacity for work which is to be found in every position of life than to some innate superiority which has predestined you from the beginning to do (in a fit of absence of mind, as it were) what can only be accomplished by others—if, indeed, it can be accomplished at all—by the unceasing labour of a lifetime. But the greatest men claim the least. And it was

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Newton who said that he was conscious of nothing else but a habit of patient thinking which could at all distinguish him from other men.

There is one unfailing source to which we can go when we want truth, common sense, wisdom. Let me remind you of Dr. Johnson's answer to Boswell on the subject we are considering. They were speaking of literary composition, and Boswell asked him very naturally whether one should wait for the favourable moment, for the afflatus before beginning to write. "No, sir," said Johnson, "he should sit down doggedly." And that is how all the work best worth doing has been and will be done. There are no short cuts. No one has emphasised this point more, or striven harder to drive it home to his students, than that great man who was both a student and a teacher in this university, Dr. Chalmers.

And, indeed, to make a man stand on his own feet is the greatest gift which your profession can bestow. The true teacher teaches with authority ; but, in so far as he understands his work, the ultimate test of his teaching is that the pupil, having received it in the first place by faith, should assimilate it by the testimony of his own investigation and proof. The life of the mind is a search for truth and a conflict with error. Error is external, but also—and this is more dangerous—internal. In the acquisition of truth, error has to be discovered and expelled.

FIND YOURSELVES !

The difference between the trained and the untrained mind should show itself in the capacity to discover error in however specious a guise it may present itself, to look for it in the least suspected lurking places and to find truth independently by the use of our own faculties. This is the straight and narrow way to wisdom, which many seek but not all find.

I have tried in these desultory thoughts to express to you what a university stands for in my mind. You are happy in your material, for your material is the Scot. It was an English poet of our own time who said :

“ The spirit perfervid of the heroic Scot,
Its fire unlulled, and hardly in earth allayed,
The ancient native prowess unforgot,
Valour undrooped, and manhood undecayed.”

Was it chance that brought these first seekers after truth to the Eastern kingdom and to the sea ? Was it not rather a profound instinct that sought the harsher East and the cold light of the morning ? The West of blue distances and mysterious islands, rising out of the unplumbed, salt, estranging sea, that ocean full of marvel and boundless—what wonder that the Little People made their last home with the Gael, in the land of the setting sun, and the long afterglow, where all the forces of nature join to turn the mind of man to the beauty of departing light and to the eternal miracle of mystery.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

But to you the sea was the highway to other lands ; the sea whose short waves were threshed by the oars of the long boats which brought the Danes to Fife what time Macbeth and Banquo drove them hence with blood and iron ; the sea in which Sir Patrick Spens, the best sailor that ever sailed the sea, lies fifty fathoms deep, " Wi' the Scots lords at his feet " ; a restless, shallow ocean, so dreaded, however, that it was enacted by a Scottish Act of Parliament that no ship should be freighted out of the kingdom with any staple goods betwixt the feast of St. Simon and St. Jude and Candlemas.

Such were the waters over which the bell of the Inchcape Rock tolled through the ages her warning note ; the sea across which Queen Mary passed twice in her troubled life, leaving her home as a child one July day when the French galleys bore her to her beloved France, and returning thirteen years later on an August evening to reign over a turbulent people through the most turbulent years of their long history.

Across your seas the link of centuries was maintained first with Norway then with France, seas illuminated by the rising sun and stirred by the East wind.

What an environment for a university ! To face the rising sun is a daily incitement to work, to search, to find. It creates an atmosphere of expectation ; the mind looks forward rather than

FIND YOURSELVES !

back. And under that sun the East wind blows. You cannot dream in the East wind : it wakes you, it stimulates you, it brings with it energy and purpose. To enjoy it you need difficulties to face, enemies to defeat.

You remember Sir Walter's Scott confession of faith ? " I was born a Scotsman and a bare one, therefore I was born to fight my way in the world —with my left hand if my right failed me and with my teeth if both were cut off." May the generations go forth into the world from this hallowed spot, equipped with knowledge, full-filled with wisdom, warriors for truth.

PIETY AND TRUE LEARNING

*From a speech delivered at
Sebright School,
October 10, 1931*

“WISDOM, knowledge and understanding” were the last words which fell from the lips of Mr. Lucas, and not until you boys in the gallery are as old as I am and have had my experience will you know that they are the three most precious, as they are the three rarest things in the whole world. And it is in the hope that you may attain some of them that your parents have sent you here.

Now we are met together on a most interesting occasion. What is it we are doing to-day? We are opening a very beautiful building which I hope may stand here for centuries, and I would like to congratulate Mr. Webb upon it. We stand at the close of one era in your history and the opening of another, and before we press forward into the future it will not be amiss to spend a few minutes in paying tribute to what the grammar schools of England have done for her during the three or four centuries of their existence.

PIETY AND TRUE LEARNING

The grammar schools of England were truly, wherever their ideal was maintained, "homes of piety and true learning," to quote from the beautiful words of your prayer which Mr. Wilson read only a few moments ago. Piety is a very fine word which in common parlance has suffered some degradation. It has come to be confused with being "pi," whereas it means nothing of the kind. *Pietas* is really the gift of reverence for all things that are good, and the gift of performing your duty primarily to those amongst whom you live, and through them to your country and the world, your duty to God and man in fact—and that comprises really in its essence the whole duty of man. True knowledge covers a very wide field. It means knowledge of yourself, which is not common; and true knowledge implies knowledge of your own ignorance which is not common—and the possession of which would save you from talking the most unutterable rot when you grow up—and the knowledge of your own limitations which best enables you to appreciate both the limitations and the good points of other people, and which enables you to know where to go to get the knowledge you require. It enables you to know the true from the false. That sounds a platitude. It sounds easy. But you would be amazed to know how many people there are who have not acquired that elementary amount of knowledge.

I like to think of grammar schools not only as

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

the homes of piety and true learning at their best, but a link between all classes. The sons of country gentlemen, sons of yeomen and farmers, sat together at their lessons and formed that knowledge of each other and of the country which is part of the binding force that made the unity of our nation before she became industrialised. The day of the grammar school here has gone, but you want to carry into the future with your new Sebright School something of the spirit of the older England, something of what made you what you are. It is not always easy, that linking-up. I am glad to hear from what your head master said that the ideal that Sebright had for his grammar school, that his foundation should be for the benefit of the children of those amongst whom he lived, is not and will not be lost sight of. There never was a time when education—and I ask you not to shy at the word : you can put your own meaning on it for the moment !—was more needed than to-day. We are to-day a complete democracy, for good or for evil, and a democracy cannot function unless it is educated. You have the privilege of being at a school like this—thousands of you throughout the country—and you are, or you will be, from the fact that you had this privilege in a position to influence and to help your fellow countrymen and women.

You boys are too young to remember what we older ones saw—the war. But you have heard

PIETY AND TRUE LEARNING

about it from your parents and your elder brothers. You probably have heard, although you may not realise it yet, that the greatest tragedy of the war for the country was the sweeping away of so many of the nation's leaders. I do not mean by that, and do not misunderstand me, the number of young officers who were killed. I mean the number of men of all classes with that peculiar character of leadership: whatever they were—working men, clerks, sons of squires, peers, what you like, you find them in every rank of the community—men with that natural gift of leadership. Those were the men who joined first and were killed first. A generation was wiped out, and we are suffering from that in the country to-day, because those are the men who now would have been from thirty-five to forty-five. That is the age of which in this country to-day there is the greatest shortage of competent men. And anyone who has had the responsibility of finding men for responsible posts—whether it be in the Church, whether it be in political office, whether it be in business, wherever it is—know how limited is the number of men of fine quality of that age which was more than decimated by the war. That makes the call more urgent on those who are now at these schools to come along and to help, and that is why we older ones, whose work is drawing nearer to its close, look with such great interest and sympathy on all these places

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

where we are trying to train you in piety and true learning.

Both these things are what we need in this country more than anything. Some people may look upon those simple days of the grammar schools and wonder what they were like, without motor-cars, and without telephones, without motor-cycles and without films ; but even if they had none of those things they made the name of England respected from one end of the world to the other, and built up an Empire.

We have not got to build up an Empire. The alternative before us, and the only alternative, is to maintain it or lose it. And which of these two it may be, depends on the democracy of this country ; and what the democracy of this country does depends largely on boys in schools like this. So you can understand well when I tell you of the sympathy we feel for these schools, the keenness of our interest, the way we watch the masters at their work, and the way we watch the boys at theirs.

After all, what has really made our country, what keeps it going, is our character, which involves our work. That is what our ancestors who were educated at the old grammar schools had ; and however great you become, and however big this school becomes, you cannot do better than that. But you must not do any worse. If you do the whole thing goes, the Empire goes, and your

PIETY AND TRUE LEARNING

country goes. So you come back to character, built up on piety and true learning. That, I think, is the lesson we all ought to learn from to-day. And I can promise you that through the hurly-burly of the next fortnight, through some very difficult years that lie before me, if I live, I shall think of to-day as I often think of similar days, as a day that gave me personally great happiness, a day that filled me personally with encouragement and that sent me back to my work with fresh confidence in our country, and fresh hope for the generations to come.

BE READY !

*From a speech delivered to the
Junior Imperial League in London,
March 10, 1928*

I THINK it well to-day, while most of us have the world before us, that we should take counsel together as to what we mean by politics. Let me beg of you all in these days of your youth to get one thing fixed firmly in your mind. You do not go into politics for what you can get, you go there for what you can give and do.

You are starting your political life in a wonderful age. The whole world since the war is trying, however feebly, and with whatever stumblings, to start a new life. There is a catchword that has been running round the world since the war. It emanated, I think, from America. At any rate it has been used here widely, and it is this : " We must make the world safe for democracy." I will give you a much truer catchword than that, and one which sets a much more difficult task : " We have got to make democracy safe for the world."

We must get another thing firmly in our heads. Do not talk about our rights ; talk about our

BE READY !

duties. For if everybody in this country did his duty there could be no question of rights : we should all have them.

Democracy, it has been said, is on its trial. That is true. Democracy, after all, is only one of many forms of government. Ever since men gathered together in the smallest tribe, until they formed themselves into vast empires, that problem of how they should be governed has remained. It has been with us from the beginning and will be with us to the end. We have one immense advantage in having left to us the Crown. The Crown not only forms the historic link that binds the centuries together, but it gives us, above all our party quarrels, one supreme head to which Tories, Liberals, and Labour can alike look up as a symbol of the unity of the nation—a head so regarded throughout all corners of the Empire and throughout the great Indian Empire. The fact that we have the crown should help us materially in our task.

What people often fail to realise is this. They have dreamed so much and talked so much of their dreams of what would happen when a complete democracy was established, that they have never impressed upon us the difficulties that are inseparable from that form of government. Tyranny is a simple form, and anarchy is simple. Democracy is not simple. You can have a good tyrant, though the word has come to have a bad meaning

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

because tyrants have generally been bad. Why? Not because the tyrant when he was in the nursery was worse than you or I at the same stage, but because he has been put in a position where he is responsible to no one but himself; and human nature cannot stand that. Our governors are responsible to the people. They must be worthy of that trust, and the people must be worthy of good governors. The contract is mutual.

Under a tyranny, there is no responsibility to the people. Anarchy is only another name for tyranny. There is no such thing in the world to-day as anarchy, except in parts of China. Anarchy generally means the tyranny of the few—an oligarchy—who hold the masses under them in an iron grip.

In neither case are the people responsible. In a democracy we are all responsible, men and women, old, middle-aged and young. Every one of us must do his duty in the consciousness that the work he does—it may be an insignificant unit—goes to make up the whole. Wherever the person is who does not realise that, there is a weak spot in the body politic that may spread and cause corruption throughout the whole.

You will never get that perfect democracy at which we aim until the whole people play their part. Every fragment must bear its share of the burden. There are few amongst you here to-day who have not lost father or brother in the war.

BE READY !

You have their share to do as well as your own. That is one of the hard things that is demanded of this generation, but it should make it easier for you to sacrifice yourselves, for the sake of your brothers.

While it is impossible under any system that the actual government can be done by the mass of the people, the responsibility falls on you to choose representatives to act for you. See that in choosing them you choose men and women whom you can trust as though they were representing you in some domestic affair at home. There can be no greater danger to a democracy than when people are careless as to the kind of representatives they choose. The responsibility rests with the people themselves, and they cannot evade it.

In our youth, when we first enter politics, there is another thing that we should think about. There is an old saying that charity begins at home. Sometimes people laugh at it, because you get some niggardly person who is asked to help a cause and who shrugs his shoulders and says he cannot because charity begins at home. That is selfishness acting under the mask of a perfectly true proverb.

What the proverb really means is this. We all of us have to begin with faith in and love for our own home and those who belong to us. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen"—

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

that is the foundation on which everything is built. Then the love of home, the sympathy with those who live at home, the work for those at home, can be carried on in ever-widening circles until you embrace the whole universe. The truest patriotism is that which is grounded in the love of home. There is a real danger if you try neglecting that elementary duty, if you think it sounds grander and bigger to embrace the love of humanity first. You are very apt to fall into exactly the same mistake that Mrs. Jellaby fell into. We do not want a nation of Jellabys.

Another thing most difficult for youth is patience. You cannot always expect to see results. The bulk of our work must be work by faith rather than work by sight. The history of the human race is a long one. It works by evolution in the political world as in the natural, and the work of evolution is slow. I can quite understand those who spend years of their early life in working—it may be in the slum areas—sometimes losing all faith and feeling that it might be better to blow the whole thing up in the hope that the fragments might come down and sort themselves into a better shape. But we know that by those means there is no progress ; and we know that, whatever may be the case in other countries, in our country at least cataclysms of that kind could only lead our people to starvation.

And so it is that we have to be patient, struggling

BE READY !

on day by day and year by year in the faith that there will be others when our work is finished to carry it along and carry it forward.

But if at home, in Great Britain, in working our democracy we fail, what then? Our failure—and this is more true of us than any people in the world—our failure would not affect ourselves only. Our failure would shake the fabric of the whole world.

Your trust is not for England alone, not for Great Britain alone. And there lies your responsibility. Our trust is the trust of our own people, wherever they may be, all over the world, and it is a trust for helping hundreds of millions of human beings to walk in and follow the path which we have carved out for ourselves, and which we believe, with its many faults, is yet the wisest and the one that ultimately makes for the greatest happiness of the peoples of this world.

It is essential for world peace and for world progress that this country stand like a rock in the waves, however rough they may be. With whatever regret those people may see it who are never so happy as when running down their own country, yet the fact remains that never before in our history have people in other lands looked to us more to give the world an example of well-ordered political progress, and of the way in which a great people can hold together after such a time as we have passed through, heal the wounds,

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

make good, and push forward grimly, earnestly into the future.

We, all of us, in this great whole are bound together by those common ideals which I have tried to shadow to you. We all believe that politics is a career worth entering upon, and that the work of politics is worth doing, wherever you may be, if you do it in the right spirit—that spirit of working towards the perfection of your own country, believing that in that way you may make your greatest contribution towards the ultimate perfection of the whole world.

I envy you “ Imps ” beginning your political life at this time. You will live to see much that is hidden from us. We have every confidence in you, and that you in your time will see some of that progress in this country that we have longed for and shall not have seen. It is within your power. You can do it if you will.

From the earliest dawn of civilisation generation after generation has been seeking, frequently falling back, to advance beyond the point at which their parents left them ; and in the earliest days we see the pioneers of politics struggling on with the rushlight, which they held for a torch to light their feet, and the coming generation seizing it from their hands in due course and pushing on into the gloom.

These lights have lighted mankind through the whole procession of the ages. Now the lights are

BE READY !

getting brighter. We know more. I think human sympathies have been amazingly quickened through these years of suffering. And while there is much selfishness abroad, and there is much of the spirit of seeking first material comfort, yet I believe there never was a time when there were more people in this country of ours, and especially among the young, determined to make whatever sacrifice is necessary for the advancement of the country's well-being, physical and spiritual.

So, every one of you, be ready in time to take up the torch from the hand of the generation that drops it. Make it give a brighter light ; carry it farther, with stronger steps. Let us feel, when our time comes to hand it on, that you will do your duty and in your turn pass it on to a generation, instructed by you, which will be yet better, so that in time long distant, and after our puny lights have been extinguished, the kingdoms of the world may be flooded with the light which we only see to-day in our dreams.

VIII

BOUND OVER TO MAKE THE PEACE

BOUND OVER TO MAKE THE PEACE

*A speech delivered at the
Annual meeting of the Peace Society, London,
October 31, 1935*

THE notes of your society say quite simply : “ This is the oldest Peace Society in the world. It was founded in 1816, at the close of the Napoleonic Wars.” The first of its objects is “ to promote, to the utmost of its ability, permanent and universal peace throughout the world.”

These words may sound to-day, after 120 years, sorrowful words, charged with the mockery, the vanity, of human wishes. I do not read them so. I am grateful to those pioneers who a century ago challenged the cynicism of their contemporaries and publicly avowed their faith in their courageous programme. Your society stands, and the best tribute I can pay to it is this : had every other country a Peace Society which, after a century's endeavour, could point to a nation so thoroughly pacific as our own is to-day, then the millennium would really be round the corner.

“ Permanent and universal peace.” The statesmen who gathered in those days at Vienna also dreamed of this, in their hard precise fashion ;

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

they even planned for it, though it was not long before their plans were waste paper. With the defeat of Napoleon a shadow that had been over Europe passed away, "and frightened kings crept out to feel the sun." Seventeen years ago another shadow passed away, and this time peoples as well as kings came out into the sunshine, and they and their leaders dreamed of peace and of an ordered society. Is it to remain a dream that slips through our longing arms, or can we give substance to plans that were made then?

Wherever men and women are gathered together at this time to talk among themselves, it will not be long before their thoughts turn to this question. Nor is it now a question for vague discussion at debating societies, or political summer schools, or even magniloquent university unions. During the past year something has happened that has made the question a sharp, insistent, personal reality for each one of us.

No man walks abroad save on his own shadow, and I must therefore speak to you in some sense as head of the Government. But I should like to make it clear that I accepted your invitation to address you long before I took the decision to hold a General Election at this time, and I do not wish my remarks to be taken as a contribution to the Election torrent. There is no need for that, for I am talking of peace, and I see no issue between

BOUND OVER TO MAKE THE PEACE

the parties in their love for peace. Perhaps, also, you will think of me as speaking personally, as one citizen of this country facing a question which no honest citizen, man or woman, can evade.

There are two reasons for this. What we are examining here is not just this present tragedy in Africa—that is only part of the larger question—or the policy either of this Government or of any Government here during the past 15 years. The question before us is this: Must the differences that arise from time to time between nations be left to force—can they ever be decided or settled in that way—or shall we consciously and resolutely attempt to solve them by the ways of discussion and law that we all adopt as a matter of course for our private differences?

Now that question will in the end be answered not by Governments but by peoples, and before we expect an unequivocal answer we must see what the answer involves. There may be Governments deliberately planning the future, leading reluctant or unsuspecting peoples into the shambles. It sometimes looks as if it were so. I confess that in my own political experience I have not encountered Governments possessed of all these malevolent qualities. Most Governments seem to be not much better or much worse than the people they govern. Nor on the whole am I disposed to conclude that the people are such an ineffective, helpless flock of sheep as those who claim to speak

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

in their name often imply. They have in fact a way of making their opinions known and heard when they feel deeply.

Here I am shedding no part of my responsibility, and indeed I take the fact of your society's existence and of its work among the people of our country, carrying its torch independently of any Government, as expressing your own agreement that it is for the peoples to consider this question and give their reply. In this you realise the responsibility of the people.

I have a second reason for treating the subject as a personal reality. Most of us, when we consider the subject, do not see great movements, deep moral or legal issues, groupings of Powers, or any of these "huge cloudy symbols." We catch our breath and think of something far more intimate, much more dear to us—of the lives of our children and grandchildren, of our friends and companions, of the familiar sights and institutions of our own land, all the boundary-stones of our spiritual estate. We live under the shadow of the last War and its memories still sicken us. We remember what modern warfare is, with no glory in it but the heroism of man. We remember forcing ourselves to read the casualty lists. Have you thought what it has meant to the world in recent years to have had that swath of death cut through the loveliest and the best of our contemporaries, how public life has suffered because those who

BOUND OVER TO MAKE THE PEACE

would have been ready to take over from our tired and disillusioned generation are not there ?

Perhaps we avert our thoughts from these terrors and send them roaming over this " dear, dear land " of ours—Shakespeare was not ashamed thus to speak of his love of his native land, and why should we be ? We think perhaps of the level evening sun over an English meadow, with the rooks tumbling noisily home into the elms, of the ploughman " with his team on the world's rim creeping like the hands of a clock," one of those garnered memories of the long peace of the countryside that a wise man takes about with him as a viaticum. To what risks do we expose our treasures—irreplaceable treasures, for you cannot build up beauty like that in a few years of mass-production.

Make no mistake ; every piece of all the life we and our fathers have made in this land, everything we have and hold and cherish, is in jeopardy in this great issue.

It may seem rather unnecessary, especially before your society, to remind anyone of these horrors ; the years do not efface our memories of what happened last time. But there is a generation growing up, coming to manhood, which never knew war. We who can still remember have a special responsibility upon us to do what we can in our own time so that they may never need to

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

know war. It is for us to see to it that these things shall not be again.

It is not just a matter of choosing peace and not war. It is not difficult to choose peace. If to choose were all, you would no longer be a society. But to make your choice effective, that is not so easy, as you and your founders have discovered.

What, may we also ask, is peace? The philosopher who wrote for the education of Princes said that "peace was a breathing-time giving a prince leisure to contrive, and furnishing ability to execute, military plans." That kind of peace is the tense quiet before a thunderstorm. In recent years we have heard again such philosophy openly proclaimed in Europe: war as the normal life of nations, something noble and magnificent, and the preparation for it as the major business of the intervals of peace. We want no such armoured peace, but, unless we are careful, it is all the peace we shall have.

There is another kind of peace, deeper, more real, appealing to the hearts and conscience of many men; it is the peace of the inward-turning spirit. Some of us know men and women going about their daily affairs in whose eyes and bearing there is a lovely quiet, and strife is stilled in their presence. Sometimes we know that this quiet is the peace after storm, that their eyes reflect a harmony hardly won after struggle and suffering, and we are fortunate when we can count such men and women among

BOUND OVER TO MAKE THE PEACE

our friends. But sometimes is it not possible that this peace comes from turning our eyes away from the struggle of others? It is the great temptation in a troubled world to turn inwards upon yourself, to cultivate that small private garden of your own personality, enriching it doubtless with many flowers, but shutting out all thought of what may be passing outside the wall.

That is a possible spiritual plan for a man, and I have heard it pressed with great eloquence and profound sincerity as a possible plan for a nation, and for our people. It is called the policy of isolation—or sometimes, to make it sound more modern and scientific, insulation. I had nearly forgotten, it is also called Splendid Isolation. I offer as an alternative to this nice derangement of epithet a much truer description: Selfish Isolation. Why is it more splendid to be by yourself than to be with other people? We might as well speak of Brilliant Collective Security. Let us keep our feet out of these adjectival enticements and walk in the way of truth unvarnished.

Upon another occasion I have expressed my thoughts upon this policy in fiery language not my own. And I do not withdraw. We cannot choose that fugitive and cloistered peace, unexercised and unbreathed, if we would. Why cannot we choose it? I would ask you to look first at a fairly large map of the world—in Mercator's projection. Do you not see in every continent of the world except

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Europe—and Europe backs on to Asia—and in every sea in the world, the answer? All those coloured places represent the heritage of our responsibility, not merely the responsibility of dominion, of acquisitiveness, of imperialism, or any other biased names, but the responsibility for the lives of human beings whom we are guarding and governing. And I think we are governing them to the best of our ability and conscience, in a tradition gained of long experience, and that few of them would now choose any others to take our place. But, I am told, no one would touch them; the broils of other nations are not ours. Does anyone think that a war between great nations, whoever they are and wherever their boundaries, can be a limited war, with someone to stop them when they go over the touchline, and that meanwhile we can trade profitably and happily with both belligerents alike in a prosperous neutrality? Modern war between any two Powers is like one of the great convulsions of nature in the early geologic ages; the map of the world has to be redrawn at the end.

Perhaps it may be wrong to say that we could not choose this policy of isolation if we would. Perhaps we could—but at what a price. If we wish to stand alone, to leave other nations alone, to use no influence towards a world order based on peace, we should have to guarantee our own security, to be prepared alone and from our own resources to

BOUND OVER TO MAKE THE PEACE

meet any possible contingency, any possible combination against us. There would be no system of insurance. Think of the strain and burden on our own resources. Think how it would cripple all our higher peaceful endeavours. What would remain of our hopes of progress, our plans of social welfare? The man who makes no friends has no friends. We should have none by our side. And for other material reasons friendship and good will are vital to us. The friendship and the confidence of the world in us are the basis of our commerce; and by our commerce we exist. Our object is to open up the world, to come and go across the seas trading for mutual advantage. This is a lesson our fathers taught us: so they built up our British Commonwealth. So, with the same enterprise must we continue in the future. We cannot bolt ourselves in an armed citadel and survive.

The motive of self-interest, if nothing else, urges us away from such a policy. A co-operative effort for peace in which we play our part is not quixotism, it is not an idealistic desire to be the policeman of the world, it is plain common sense applied to the facts of things as they are.

But I do not accept the view that cold common sense need be our only guide in policy to-day. We are a world Power, and we have responsibilities to the world. It is important sometimes to remind ourselves that power and place and

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

possessions bring their duties as well as their rights and privileges. There is no country in the world that, with its wide-scattered frontiers, so much needs peace as we do, and the peace that we seek is the peace of the world—in your own words, “permanent and universal peace.” Alone we cannot find that peace, and no other peace in the end will be worth the having. It is no egotistic nationalism on our part to believe that from our experience, from our traditions and political development, from something in the mixture of our national character, we have a contribution to make by which peace, when it comes, will be enriched.

In our old legal language there is a phrase for a brawler who would disturb society ; he is “bound over to keep the peace.” In that judgment there is not law alone : there is mercy, and more than mercy, there is an appeal to what the old theologians, in their happy and exact words, termed the better nature of man.

A heavier duty is laid upon us. By the law of the Covenant we have signed, by mercy for those who suffer if we fail by our unquenchable hope in the reason, in the better nature of man—and without this hope and faith we cannot guide our lives—we are bound over to *make* the peace. Just as we cannot have our peace alone, we cannot make the peace alone ; it takes two to make a quarrel, and it will take all to make the peace.

We cannot make the peace by good intentions,

BOUND OVER TO MAKE THE PEACE

by resonant declarations, by pacific gestures and attitudes, however noble they may seem to us. It is the history of mankind that if our aspirations are to be made effective they must be embodied in an institution, in a Church, in an Order, in a Parliamentary assembly. Those who drew up the Treaty at the end of the War have been criticised for many things, but at least they faced the logic of their task in the framework of the League of Nations, with its details and its recognition that there might be, on occasion, a backslider.

The League of Nations is not the first expression of the corporate desire of civilised peoples for peace, though it is perhaps, even now, the most comprehensive. But it is the most workmanlike. Its creators knew that it was not sufficient to desire peace ; it might become necessary to enforce it. We are members of the League, loyal members, steadily becoming clearer about its importance, its necessity, steadily becoming more resolute to base our policy upon the Covenants we entered into in its name, recognising that their fulfilment may involve risks, but believing that there lies our duty and that only so can we progress to the rule of law and order and peace which the League was designed to give to a fevered world.

As we base our policy firmly upon the League it is important that we should understand how it is designed, not in the details of its procedure, but in its broad essentials.

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

There are two matters in which the League is, I believe, distinguished from all other similar efforts in the past. It provides for regular meetings of its members to discuss business of all kinds, upon much of which agreement is not difficult to reach. The value of this is not always understood. It means that the representatives of the Powers come to know each other and to recognise points of view on matters where ultimate agreement is certain ; they are not called together only at moments of crisis when nerves and tempers are strained, and each man must manœuvre for position. It is one of the difficulties of arrangements for conciliation in industry that, too frequently, the parties only meet when they are approaching a dispute ; they meet as sides in opposition, and not as partners in a joint enterprise ; they come to know each other as antagonists. The League meets more often as partners in a joint enterprise ; its business is not always spectacular, and is not honoured by newspaper headlines, but it is solid, for it is nothing less than the gradual creation of the *communis sensus* of civilised mankind. It is part of this procedure that the League has its own permanent machinery, its own permanent headquarters ; it is a corporate institution.

The other great " note " of this organisation is that in its constitution it provides boldly, and yet with deliberation, a procedure for dealing with any

BOUND OVER TO MAKE THE PEACE

Power that proposes to break the international convention of peaceful settlement for which the League stands. Some people apparently find this rather shocking. They have no objection to the League while it discusses matters like the drug traffic, or issues good exhortations, but shrink from it when it means business and does business. They consider that it should not meddle with some abstract thing called "vital issues," issues affecting the honour and dignity of a nation, especially of a great nation. What is it there for? Can an assembly of nations not recognise the honour and dignity of each of its members? Is every nation to be entitled to say, "this is a matter touching my honour, and I, and I alone, am judge of my conduct in that position"? If so, let us give up the miserable pretence..

It is true that this judgment may lead to action, cautionary action, restraining action, at the extreme to coercive action. We mean nothing by the League if we are not prepared, in the end, and after grave and careful trial, to take action to enforce its judgment. Look at the alternative. When I spoke, so inadequately, of the horrors of war, was it not clear that we must be prepared to take risks to prevent that evil thing stalking again across the world? Our object is to end war, to end wars that may shake the world as we know it beyond all hope of recovery within the life of such as will still be alive at the end of another experience. The judgment

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

of the world, given, as it must be, unanimously, in open Assembly, after long discussion, is no light and hasty thing. The last few weeks have taught us what it means. May I call to your minds the solemn tones of St. Augustine's great words, "*Securus judicat orbis terrarum.*" That is the power of the League of Nations.

May I turn now for a moment to some criticisms of the League, not so much in its present actions—those we are supporting—but as an institution for peace, an institution for the peace of our own country and its Commonwealth. We are told that we put at the judgment of the votes of other countries the safety and interests of our own people. Is this true? Is that what I, as Head of the Government, am really doing?

I hear sometimes of the necessity for creating an "international mind." I am afraid that my heart is too stubbornly local for me to follow that high thought; it may be true that we were given all the world to love, but our affections are small, and so they have one place that they love over all. I am an impenitent patriot; like Gilbert's heroic figure, "I remain an Englishman." I do not want daily to become more and more like my neighbour, nor would it gratify my self-esteem if he became daily more like me. I respect him and his ways, even if mine are different; I hope that he will let me go my ways also. England is no less England because she is a member of the

BOUND OVER TO MAKE THE PEACE

League. She surrenders nothing that she would wish to retain, merely because she wishes to live at peace with other nations ; she asks no surrender of others. The League will grow in strength as we respect the individuality of the nations which compose it. It is an oddity of some schools of thought that they respect and even adore nationalism when small nations are asserting themselves, sometimes to the vexation of their elders, but regard it as a vice when it colours the life and thoughts of millions of people in one nation.

Then it is said that the League is imperfect, that it is not a League of Nations, because several great Powers are outside it. I wish they were in it ; I hope that before long they will be in it.

The United States has never been a member, though their President moulded the League, and, despite all checks and disappointments, was able to see his vision take shape. I am certain that there are millions of American citizens who are watching with lively sympathy our efforts to make the League an instrument of world peace.

Germany has left the League. Since the outbreak of the War there has been no deeper disappointment for all who care for that precious architecture of the human spirit which we call Europe than this decision. We regret it, but the future is open, and I trust that a solution may not be impossible.

Japan also has left the League. She is a world

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

Power who has turned her back on the rest of the world. We must look fairly at her reasons, for they lie deeply in the criticisms of the League. Is the League a powerful instrument for preserving the *status quo* and nothing more? Does it not recognise that in the evolution of nations and their needs there may be room for change?

If the League only exists to keep things as they are it will become desiccated and crumble into dust. In truth, it is a living organism, and like any other living organism must be capable of development and change. That change must come primarily from within, be wrought within the framework of the League; it must be an ordered evolution.

In Sir Samuel Hoare's speech at the Assembly at Geneva, on behalf of the Government and the people of this country, he recognised fully and squarely that in the present ordering of the world there may be arrangements which seem to deprive other nations of the chances they think they should have as members of the society of the world. He instanced one thing—a more free access to raw materials, and to the economic development of backward countries. Those words were not spoken lightly. We know what they may mean for us, and we do not shrink from them. But we insist, and shall continue to insist, that any changes shall be examined within the League, shall receive the sanction of the League, and be

BOUND OVER TO MAKE THE PEACE

carried out peacefully under the auspices of the League.

The League is living ; it also gains adherents ; that is a sign of growth. Not long ago it was strengthened by the advent of the Union of Soviet Republics of Russia.

And so, despite the defections, the League lives. It is still young, trying to find a firm foothold in a slippery world. One would think in reading certain speeches that it was the easiest thing in the world to make fifty nations march in perfect step, as though they were fifty guardsmen on parade, each an exact replica of the other. Geneva is no Horse Guards Parade. Mr. Eden and his colleagues represent fifty nations, with diverse traditions, every variety of economic circumstance, every degree of military strength and weakness, every sort of relationship with near neighbours and distant customers. The attempt at common and effective action to stop war which Geneva is now putting forth is without precedent in magnitude.

In those circumstances old relations with old friends are being put to the strain. That is not surprising. But I do not believe those old relations, those old friendships, can be fundamentally impaired. There are elements, often vocal elements, in France that have not seen eye to eye with us in this matter, but there is solidarity between the two Governments as loyal

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

members of the League, and that is what really matters.

There is another old friend with whom as a member of the League we are in dispute. The dispute between the League and Italy is real, but it is not more real than our friendship. Of all the currents of our policy over half a century none has run more truly or more steadily than friendship for Italy. How it came about, frankly I do not know. The Romans conquered us, but of all the peoples that they conquered they left less mark upon us than upon any other. Something of the magnificence of Italy was wafted to us on the sails of our Elizabethan mariners, and no man later had completed his polite education until he had seen and admired what Italian genius had built and painted for the joy of the world. Then suddenly, in the nineteenth century, all this remote æsthetic admiration deepened to a profound popular sympathy and interest and affection which, as I have said, has coloured all our policy to this day. And it still colours it, though our actions and our motives to-day are under deep suspicion. We believe, if I may say so, that Italy is rashly departing from her own great traditions which earned and held our affection and sympathy over so many years. We have tried to make it clear that we are moving in no spirit of national antagonism against Italy. If we have failed to make it clear, we must try again, for behind all our present policy it is the

BOUND OVER TO MAKE THE PEACE

underlying truth ; in being true to our pledged word to the League we wish also to preserve an old friendship. But loyalty to our pledge is inescapable, for, as the Secretary of State said in his recent Note to the French Government, we look on the League as the only escape from " the senseless disasters of the past." That is the key to our whole action and to our every motive.

It will not have escaped your reflection that, in our loyalty to the League, we take heavy responsibilities. Those responsibilities we must be in a position to discharge. That involves us in some hard thinking and hard decisions. If we wish to bring peace on earth, we must keep our own feet on the ground.

We have a great, an immeasurably great, influence, to throw in on the side of peace. But, unfortunately, the world is not yet in a state in which that influence can be merely moral. The peace, that " permanent and universal peace " of which your society speaks, is not yet made. It must be founded upon order and upon law, and, so far, mankind has had still to rest its enforcement of law upon force. It may be suggested that example is all-sufficient. I wish with all my heart that I could believe this to be true.

I have, I trust, assured you of the Government's determination " to promote, to the utmost of its ability, permanent and universal peace throughout the world," and testified by their actions that this

THIS TORCH OF FREEDOM

object of yours is foremost in their minds—and personally I have assured you of my own faith in your work. I hope that, if the sky has become overcast, you will find some encouragement in what I have said to work on through another year towards your noblest of ideals. You must look ahead in a spirit of realism. You must work in the world as it now is, and in our present state of civilisation, striving to your utmost to improve it. I am not asking you to search the skies, to look for clouds on the horizon, much less to give way to imaginings of possible grounds or signs of trouble ; nor to talk of such things. I think that all such talk of trouble is evil ; and it fomenta a feeling of nervous excitement which is itself an unhealthy condition. It is a condition which has been developing in some quarters overseas, and I do not like it. Let your aim be resolute and your foot-steps firm and certain. Do not fear or misunderstand when the Government say that they are looking to our defences. It does not mean that we look upon force as the judge and law-giver in the affairs of nations. We do not dedicate ourselves to such evil, and there is here no spirit whatever of aggression. But weakness, or wavering, or uncertainty, or neglect of our obligations—obligations for peace—doubts of our own safety give no assurance of peace ; believe me, quite the reverse. Do not fear that it is a step in the wrong direction. You need not remind me of

BOUND OVER TO MAKE THE PEACE

the solemn task of the League—to reduce armaments by agreement. I know, and I shall not forget. But we have gone too far alone, and must try to bring others along with us. I give you my word that there will be no great armaments. Abroad our action will be sincerely welcomed by all who seek peace as giving greater certainty and security to the world, as assuring the world that we stand by our pledges, and promising a fuller and more effective use of our influence in the work of peace.

I have spoken clearly. We are “bound over to make the peace,” and it may not be an easy task. But we accept it.

